HISTORY OF INDIA

1000 – 1707

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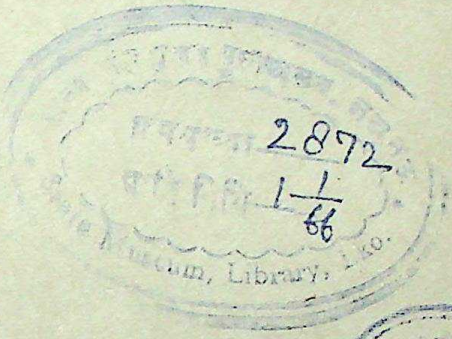

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PREFACE

This book has been written to meet the requirements of the students preparing for the B.A. examination of those of our Universities where Medieval Indian History from 1000 A.D. to 1707 A.D. has been prescribed for the first degree examination. It is not a new work, and consists of relevant chapters of the author's well-known books, *the Sultanate of Delhi* and *the Mughal Empire*. The object is to provide in a handy volume the history of Medieval India from 1000 A.D. to 1707 A.D., which our students can easily buy and read. All aspects of the subject have been dealt with in plain and simple language, and it will no longer be necessary for young aspirants to search for matter for this paper in more than one book. It is hoped that it will prove useful to young graduates in our universities and also to the general reader.

—A. L. Srivastava

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1

INDIA ON THE EVE OF MAHMUD OF GHAZNI'S INVASION

Political condition

There was one notable difference in the political condition of our country at the time of the Arab invasion of Sindh and that on the eve of the Ghaznavide penetration into Hindustan. At the opening of the eighth century there was no foreign colony, much less a foreign power, in the land except a handful of Arab merchants on our western coast whose primary avocation was trade. On the other hand, in the tenth century there were two foreign kingdoms on our soil, namely, Multan and Mansura or Sindh. Besides, a considerable portion of the population in these two kingdoms had been converted to Islam. There were also Arab colonies in southern India, particularly in Malabar, where the Hindu rulers had foolishly permitted the foreigners to proselytize the native population. As was natural for these new converts to a religion, they preferred the foreign ways of life and had sympathy with their fellow Muslims from Ghazni and Central Asia. Subuktigin and Mahmud of Ghazni, as also Muhammad of Ghur, about 150 years later, were lucky to enjoy some kind of moral support from a section of the Indian people.

The Arab kingdoms of Multan and Sindh

The history of the Arab kingdoms need not be related. Suffice it to say that they comprised the whole of modern Multan and Sindh and threw off the Caliph's yoke in 871 A.D. and, since that date, enjoyed complete independence. In view, however, of their peculiar position in a foreign country they nominally professed allegiance to the Caliph for diplomatic reasons. There were dynastic changes in this kingdom from time to time. At the beginning of our period, Multan was ruled by the Karmathians and its ruler was Fateh Daud. He seems to have been a man of some ability. Sindh proper was still ruled over by the Arabs. The neighbouring Hindu kingdoms, despite their political and religious experience at

the hands of the Arabs, had left them unmolested. Everywhere the Arabs and, curiously enough, the new Hindu converts to Islam, were shown consideration and allowed to follow their religion and to make new converts. They constituted a power to be reckoned with.

There was indigenous rule in the rest of the country. Notable among the kingdoms may be enumerated the following.

The Hindushahi kingdom

The first important Hindu kingdom extended from the river Chenab to the Hindukush mountains and included Kabul. Its royal house had resisted, single-handed, the Arab encroachment successfully for 200 years. It was, however, compelled to abandon a part of Afghanistan, including Kabul, and to shift its capital to Udbhandapur or Waihand. The king about the end of the tenth century was the famous Jaipala who was a brave soldier and an able ruler. The situation of his kingdom obliged him to bear the first Turkish onslaughts from Ghazni.

Kashmir

The next notable kingdom was that of Kashmir. Its ruling family, the house of Utpala, came into conflict with the Hindushahi kingdom and the empire of Kanauj. The famous Kashmiri king, Shankaravarman, extended the boundaries of Kashmir in several directions. He died fighting with the people of Urasa, the modern Hazara district. His death was followed by a great confusion. The Brahmans of the Valley, therefore, raised a member of their own fraternity, named Yasaskara, to the throne. His line came to an end within a brief period and was followed by that of Parvagupta. Parvagupta's son and successor was Kshemagupta. During his time his queen, Dida, was the virtual ruler. This powerful lady ultimately seized the throne and crowned herself queen. She ruled over Kashmir till 1003 A.D. when the throne passed to Sangrama Raja, who became the founder of the Lohara dynasty. Thus, when Mahmud of Ghazni was hammering the gates of India, the reins of Kashmir were in the hands of a woman and the condition of the kingdom was far from satisfactory.

Kanauj

The imperial city of Kanauj had passed into the hands of a new dynasty, known as the Pratihara dynasty, in or about 836 A.D.

The Pratiharas traced their descent from Lakshmana, the brother of Shri Rama Chandra, the hero of the Ramayana. But scholars believe that they descended from the Gurjara race. It is said that a certain Gurjara chief served the Rashtrakuta ruler as a *pratihara* (door-keeper) at a sacrifice at Ujjain about the middle of the eighth century A.D. Probably the term *pratihara* was for the first time used in the above connection. A notable ruler of the Pratihara dynasty was Vatsaraja, who won the title of *Samrat* or emperor. He was succeeded by Nagabhatta II who, too, was a notable fighter. He defeated Dharmapala, the king of Bangal; but he suffered defeat at the hands of the Rashtrakutas. The Pratiharas continued to exercise sway over Kanauj and Madhyadesha and to fight, sometimes successfully and at others unsuccessfully, with their neighbours in the north and the south. The Pratihara king, Mahipala, was badly defeated by Indra III, the Rashtrakuta king of the Dakhin. He lost his capital, Kanauj. He was, however, restored by a Chandela king. The Pratihara power was, nevertheless, weakened and the rulers of the dynasty maintained a precarious hold over the upper Ganga valley and parts of Rajasthan and Malwa. Their former feudatories, the Chandelas of Bundelkhand, the Chalukyas of Gujarat and the Paramaras of Malwa, became independent. The last king of this dynasty was Rajyapala. He was a feeble monarch and his capital, Kanauj, was invaded by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1018 A.D. The Pratiharas, in their early days, had successfully fought the Arabs and defended the country against them; but they had grown effete and, in the early years of the eleventh century A.D., they succumbed before the might of the Turks from Ghazni.

The Palas of Bangal

Devapala of the Pala dynasty died after thirty-nine years of reign, some time between 833 and 878 A.D. His successors were weak and the kingdom of Bangal rapidly declined under them. The degenerate later Pala kings came into conflict with the Pratiharas of Kanauj and brought sufferings on Bangal. Mahipala I, who ruled Bangal in the first quarter of the eleventh century, was a contemporary of Mahmud of Ghazni. He succeeded in restoring, at least partially, the fortunes of his family; but a part of Bangal had already fallen into the hands of the powerful vassals who only vaguely recognized the overlordship of the Pala kings. While Mahmud of Ghazni was wasting north-western India with fire and

sword, Bangal was threatened by the power of Tamil ruler, Rajendra Chola. In this warfare Bangal had the worst of it. It, however, remained immune from the Ghaznavide invasion owing to its distance.

Minor kingdoms

Besides the above there were several other small ruling houses in northern India, notable among them being the Chalukyas of Gujarat, the Chandelas of Bundelkhand and the Paramaras of Malwa. They had once been the feudatories to Kanauj, but had declared their independence during the weak rule of the later Pratiharas of the Imperial city.

The Dakhin kingdoms

The progress of the people in southern India was marred by constant warfare among the ruling families. The early Chalukyas in the Dakhin had fallen in the struggle for supremacy, in 753 A.D., at the hands of the Rashtrakutas. The latter, who were at constant warfare with their neighbours, had given place to the later Chalukyas in 973 A.D. Similarly, the great Pallava dynasty had fallen towards the end of the ninth century. The principal kingdoms in the south during our period were the later Chalukya kingdom of Kalyani and the Chola kingdom of Tanjore. The founder of the later Chalukya dynasty was Taila II who claimed descent from the early Chalukyas of Vatapi. He made Kalyani, now in the Hyderabad State, his capital. His successors were involved in a struggle with the Cholas of Tanjore. The Cholas were the descendants of Aditya Chola and had risen to importance under Ramaraja. His son, Rajendra Chola, was a great warrior and conqueror. He made extensive conquests in southern and northern India and was considered one of the greatest rulers in the country. While the Cholas and the Chalukyas were involved in a bitter conflict in the south, mighty empires in Hindustan were crumbling before the might of Mahmud of Ghazni.

Social and religious conditions

For nearly three centuries after the advent of the Arabs our country enjoyed immunity from foreign invasions. This long freedom from foreign interference produced a feeling in the minds of our people and rulers that India could never be threatened by a foreign power. Eternal vigilance, which is said to be the price of

freedom, not only slackened but almost reached the vanishing point. Our rulers neglected their armies. They failed to fortify our north-western frontier and to make an effective arrangement for the defence of the hilly passes through which foreign armies could enter the country. Side by side with this, our people failed to keep in touch with the new military tactics and with the newly invented systems of warfare. Secondly, for the selfsame reason, the people lost almost completely the sense of patriotism and national ardour, which develops under the stimulus of danger from abroad. That was not an age of territorial patriotism; but whatever patriotism there was, disappeared owing to a false sense of security. Thirdly, a kind of narrowmindedness became the characteristic of our people from the eighth to the eleventh centuries of the Christian era. They believed that they were a chosen people and all other people were unfit to be associated with them. The famous scholar Al Beruni, who came to our country in the trains of Sultan Mahmud Ghazni and studied Sanskrit language and Hindu religion and thought, had to note with surprise that "the Hindus believed that there is no country like theirs, no nation like theirs, no king like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs." He adds that the ancestors of the Hindus "were not so narrowminded as the present (eleventh century) generation." He was also struck by the fact that the Hindus did "not desire that a thing which has once been polluted should be purified and thus recovered."

During this period our country was practically isolated from the rest of the world. Owing to this fact our people ceased to come into touch with foreign lands and, therefore, became ignorant of the happenings, political, military and cultural, in the outside world. Want of contact with dissimilar people and cultures bred stagnation and made our civilisation decadent. In fact, a slow but sure decadence began to manifest itself in every aspect of our life during the period. The Sanskrit literature of these centuries is much inferior in virility and taste to that of the fifth and the sixth centuries. Our architecture and painting and fine arts were similarly adversely influenced; our society, too, became static, caste rules became more rigid. Widowhood began to be rigorously imposed, remarriage of widows among higher classes almost completely stopped and food and drink taboos came into existence. The 'untouchables' were compelled to reside outside the towns.

In the domain of religion also, which must always be the fountain-head of right conduct and morality, perceptible degeneration crept in. The great Shankaracharya, who had organised Hinduism and given it a common philosophical background, had failed to purge it of great evils that had crept into it. *Vamamarga Dharma* had become popular at this period, specially in Kashmir and Bangal. The followers of this creed indulged in wine, flesh, fish and women, and they believed in the motto of 'eat, drink and be merry'. The vicious ideas of this school had permeated some of our educational institutions, patricularly in the University of Vikramasila in Bihar. An incident that took place at the above named university shows how deep the moral canker had gone into our life in that age. A student priest was found with a bottle of wine and, on being interrogated by the university authorities, he revealed that it had been given to him by a nun. When the authorities decided to take disciplinary action against him, the members of the university split up into two parties and the result was trouble. When such an incident could take place at a highest seat of learning, the condition of the upper and middle class people, who lived in sloth and luxury, can well be imagined. Our great *mathas*, which were originally great seats of learning and piety, became centres of luxury and idleness. Many of the monks became licentious. The order of the *sannyasis* lost its significance, but the common people continued showing them reverence. Another evil which can be traced in its exaggerated form to this period was the *devadasi* system. Every important temple had a number of unmarried girls dedicated to the service of the deity. This bred corruption and temple prostitution became common. Tantrik literature which was obscene in the extreme, developed rapidly in this era. It produced an adverse effect on our morals. It was not considered derogatory by the greatest of our scholars of this period to write obscene books. A minister to one of the kings in Kashmir wrote a book named *Kuttini Matam* or 'Opinions of a Go-Between'. Another great Sanskrit scholar, Kshemendra, published *Samaya Matraka* or 'the Autobiography of a Prostitute'. In this book "the heroine describes her adventures in every sphere of society, as a courtesan, as the mistress of a noble, as a street walker, as a go-between, as a false nun, as a corrupter of the youth and as a frequenter of religious places." All this led to moral degeneration

among the upper and the middle class people. Probably the common folk were free from the debasing effect of current literature and *Vamamarga* religion.

Economic condition

Economically the country was rich. Its great mineral and agricultural wealth had continued accumulating for generations, individuals had piled up riches and our temples were their storehouses; but there was great disparity of wealth. The topmost people, that is, the members of the ruling families and their nobles and courtiers rolled in wealth and luxury. The merchant princes were millionaires and spent thousands of rupees in charity. Ordinary village folk were rather poor, though not in want. They were thrifty. They had a few belongings. Nevertheless, the general life was economically prosperous owing to the accumulated wealth, peace and commerce. It was this fabulous wealth that tempted Mahmud of Ghazni to invade our country. Our rulers did not know how to ensure the great wealth of India by organising a wise system of defence. The political structure was also weak. The institutions, of course, were the same as in the time of Harsha; but there was a marked deterioration in the spirit in which they worked. The bureaucracy was corrupt and people, in general, enervated by a variety of debasing influences.

This was the condition of India at the time when Mahmud of Ghazni invaded her. Though outwardly strong, she was unprepared for defending her religion and liberty.

2

MAHMUD OF GHAZNI

Rise of the Turks

Inspite of their initial success the Arabs had not been able to extend their dominion beyond Sindh and Multan. In fact, their rule dwindled into insignificance by the middle of the ninth century A.D. It was left to the Turks to complete the work begun by the Arabs. The Turks had, a short time before our period, embraced Islam and possessed all the zeal and narrowmindedness of neophytes. They were intrepid, brave, full of boundless energy and push and thoroughly materialistic in their outlook. Islam had given them a thin veneer of religiosity. They were inordinately ambitious and their qualities and faults combined to make them eminently fit for founding a big military empire in the east.

Their early raids : Sabuktigin

The Turks who first came into contact with India belonged to an upstart ruling family of Ghazni. A Turkish adventurer named Alaptagin, who was originally a slave and vassal of the Samanid king of Khurasan and Bukhara, established himself as an independent ruler at Ghazni in 962 A.D. One of his successors, named Pirai, signalized his rule by undertaking an invasion of the Indian territory in the possession of the raja of the Panjab. This raja, who belonged to the Hindushahi dynasty, ruled over an extensive territory extending from the river Chenab to the Hindukush mountain, including Kabul. The Hindushahi kingdom had once embraced the whole of modern Afghanistan which was geographically and culturally a part of India. Politically, too, though not continuously, it had been a province of our country since the days of Chandragupta Maurya in the third century B.C. The royal house of this 'Kingdom of Kabul and Zabul' had manfully resisted the Arab aggression. In 664 A.D., however, the latter succeeded in encroaching upon a part of its territory and converting 12,000 of its inhabitants to Islam. For more than three hundred years the Shahi kings fought bravely, and with considerable success, though single-handed, in self-defence, against

INDIA IN 1030 A.D.
Mahmud of Ghazni.

TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
Balkh
Ghur
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Peshawar
Waihand
HINDUSHAHI
KASHMIR
Srinagar
UTPALAS
CHINA
TIBET
PERSIA
Nandanah
Bhera
Sialkot
Kangara
Lahore
Dipalpur
Multan
Sarhind
Bhatinda
Ush
Kalat
Sunam
Thaneshwar
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
Amroha
CHAUHAN
Mathura
Alwar
Ajmer
Agra
Kanauj
Lucknow
Ayodhya
PRATIHARAS
Gwalior
Mahoba
Kalinjar
CHANDELAS
Pattiputra
Banaras
Gaya
PALAS
Gaur
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
Nadia
SIN
Siwana
Jalor
Abu
Chittor
Amarkot
Thatta
Debal
Ahhilwara
CHALUKYAS
Ujjain
Dhar
Bhilsa
Mandu
PARAMARAS
Somanath
Illichpur
Jajnagar
Daman
Deogiri
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
CHALUKYAS
Kalyani
Warangal
Haiderabad
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Raichur
Sandabur
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
CHOLAS
Kanchi
Kampil
Dwara samudra
Calicut
Tanjore
PANDYAS
CEYLON
Colombo
ANDAMANIS

Boundary of the Empire
Over-run by Mahmud

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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their aggressive Muslim neighbours, first the Arabs and then the Turks. The nascent kingdom of Ghazni wanted to blot this Shahi kingdom out of existence, for it had barred its path of progress to India. Accordingly, Pirai's foreign policy was followed by his successor, Sabuktigin who was a slave and son-in-law of Alaptagin and became king of Ghazni in April 977 A.D. Sabuktigin was a powerful and ambitious chief. Inspite of his constant occupation in Central Asian politics, he found time to raid the frontier of India. Jaipala, the raja of the Panjab, being conscious of the danger of the existence of a rising kingdom in his immediate neighbourhood, pursued the policy of trying to nip the evil in the bud. So he invaded Ghazni with a large force in 986-87 A.D. The parties were well-matched and neither side seemed to give in. Unfortunately, however, owing to a great storm, which disorganised Jaipala's army, the raja had to agree to a peace by which he promised a large indemnity and fifty elephants and some territory to Sabuktigin. But, on his return to Lahore, he repudiated these humiliating terms. Sabuktigin now retaliated by an invasion of the raja's territory and plundering Lamghan. Jaipala called to his aid a number of rulers of the Indian principalities, and marched on Ghazni at the head of a powerful force. In the contest that followed Sabuktigin was again victorious, and he captured Lamghan and Peshawar.

Accession of Mahmud

Sabuktigin died in 997 A.D. and was succeeded by his famous son, Mahmud, though not without a war of succession between him and his younger brother, Ismail, who was nominated heir by their dying father. Mahmud was born on 1st November 971 A.D., and was, at the time of his accession in 998 A.D., twenty-seven years of age. At that time his kingdom comprised Afghanistan and Khurasan. Mahmud secured the formal recognition of his sovereignty from the Caliph of Baghdad (al-Qadir Billah). He was also given the title Yamin-ud-Daulah and Amin-ul-Millah. His dynasty is, therefore, known as the Yamini dynasty.

His character

Mahmud was an extremely ambitious young man. It is said that on the occasion of his investiture by the Khalifa he took a vow to undertake every year an expedition against the infidels of India. He tried to fulfil this vow. Mahmud was not gifted with kingly

looks. He was a man of medium height and of strong build, but was rather ugly looking. He did not possess extraordinary personal prowess. Nevertheless, he was a great general and also an equally good soldier. He was an extremely intelligent and shrewd man, endowed with the royal gift of judging human character. His outstanding virtues were cool courage, prudence and resourcefulness. He was, moreover, a man of restless activity and overpowering ambition. He possessed a habitual air of command and was adept in statecraft. He considered no body as indispensable and used every one he came into contact with as an instrument for the attainment of his object. Professor Muhammad Habib says that his outlook on life was essentially secular and that he was not a man to follow the Muslim *ulema* blindly. He was not, according to this learned author, a fanatic. Mahmud's life and his deeds, however, demonstrate the fact that he was, without doubt, devoted to his religion and that he believed that he was serving the cause of Islam in carrying unprovoked war into the territory of the Hindu idolators. His court historian, Utbi, looked upon Mahmud's expeditions to India as *jihad*, that is, holy war for the extirpation of idolatry and propagation of Islam. "Sultan Mahmud," he writes in his *Tarikh-i-Yamini*, "at first designed in his heart to go to Sijistan, but subsequently preferred to engage previously in a *holy war against Hind*." Utbi adds that he called a council of his officers "in order to secure a blessing on his design of *exalting the standard of religion*, widening the plain of right, of illuminating the words of truth and strengthening the power of justice." These words clearly show that Mahmud's contemporaries believed that one of the main objects of his aggressive policy against our country was to serve his religion. There were, of course, other reasons. Mahmud was an ambitious man and wanted to rule over as big an empire as a man could possibly create. He was fond of wealth, as all powerful people are, and he had heard of the stories of India's fabulous riches. He was, moreover, a warrior thirsting for military glory. Besides, being a realist, he might possibly have considered the continued existence of a hostile Hindu power in his immediate neighbourhood as a menace to his independent existence, or, at any rate, to his policy of expansion. For all these reasons Mahmud decided, almost immediately after his accession, to pursue a policy of aggressive warfare against Hindustan.

His Indian expeditions

Historians are divided in their opinion regarding the number of Mahmud's invasions on India. Our authorities are so conflicting that it is not possible to ascertain correctly from their statements their exact number. Nor is it very necessary to do so. Some of the most important of these invasions must, however, be noted.[1] The earliest of them took place in 1000 A.D. when Mahmud occupied a few frontier forts. Next he proceeded against Jaipala who is branded by his enlightened historian as 'the enemy of God'. The Sultan had taken all possible precautions in this expedition and selected 15,000 of his picked cavalrymen by a personal inspection of the members of his army. A well-contested battle was fought near Peshawar on 27th November, 1001 A.D. Mahmud's cavalry manoeuvres proved to be effective and, inspite of his valour, Jaipala suffered defeat. He was taken prisoner along with his sons and grandsons and a number of important relatives and officers. Utbi writes that they "being strongly bound with ropes, were carried before the Sultan, like as evil-doers, on whose faces the fumes of infidelity are evident.....and will be bound and carried to Hell. Some had their arms forcibly tied behind their backs, some were seized by the cheek, some were driven by blows on the neck." Mahmud's men appropriated a necklace of gems and rubies from the neck of Jaipala whose value was two lakhs of *dinars*, and similar ornaments from the raja's companions. The victors got spoils 'beyond all bounds of calculation'. Jaipala was released on promise to pay a huge ransom and to surrender fifty of his elephants. Mahmud followed his victory by advance to Waihand (Udabhandapur, modern Hund), which was Jaipala's capital, ravaging the country on the way. He returned to Ghazni soon after, crowned with the laurels of victory and loaded with countless wealth.

Jaipala could not suffer himself to survive the shock of the humiliation he had experienced at the hands of an 'unclean foreigner' and, out of remorse, he burnt himself to death. He was succeeded by his son, Anandapala, in 1002 A.D. These catastrophic incidents must have caused great discouragement and dismay among Jaipala's friends and followers, whereas they must have raised the spirits of

[1] *Sir Henry Elliot*, Vol. II, Appendix D, pp. 434-78 recounts seventeen expeditions of Mahmud, which are usually accepted.

Mahmud and his hordes and whetted their appetite for fresh conquests and booty.

Mahmud's next important invasion was directed against Multan which was ruled over by Fateh Daud who was a Karmathian. The Karmathians were heterodox Shia Muslims and were hated by orthodox Sunnis. As a preliminary to the conquest of Multan, Mahmud led an expedition to Bhera on the left bank of the Jhelam. Anandapala opposed the invader; but he was hustled out of the way, and in 1006 A.D. Mahmud marched upon Multan which he conquered. This new conquest was placed in the hands of Sukhapala, a grandson of Jaipala, who was one of the hostages taken by Mahmud to Ghazni after the final defeat of Jaipala and was there made to embrace Islam. He was called Nausha Shah. Sukhapala, however, adjured his new religion and revolted against Mahmud, who returned to Multan in 1008 A.D. and captured and imprisoned him and Daud. Multan, thus, became a part of Mahmud's wide kingdom.

By allying himself with the Karmathian Daud, Anandapala had given great offence to Mahmud. On the other hand, the conquest of Multan by the ruler of Afghanistan had exposed Anandapala's dominion to attack from two directions. A final and decisive clash between the antagonists was, therefore, only a question of time. Moreover, Mahmud felt that without occupying the Panjab he could not hope to penetrate into the heart of Hindustan and reap the harvests of rich plunder. Anandapala, too, did not fail to appreciate the significance of these developments. He collected a large army, which was probably reinforced by contingents from the neighbouring princes who were anxious to stem the tide of the Turkish expansion. At the head of this force Anandapala proceeded towards Peshawar. Mahmud met him on the plain opposite Waihand near about the year 1009 A.D. and succeeded in inflicting a crippling blow upon the raja. The Indian army broke down and it retreated in disorder. Mahmud pursued them and besieged the fort of Nagarkot near Kangara. This fort fell into the enemy's hands after three days' stubborn resistance. Mahmud acquired rich booty here, including immense gold and various other precious commodities. The entire country from the Indus to Nagarkot fell into the hands of the victor. Utbi, the historian of Mahmud, writes that at Nagarkot so much booty was acquired that "the treasures were laden on the backs of

as many camels as they could procure, and the officers carried away the rest. The stamped coin amounted to 70,000 royal *dirhams* and the gold and silver ingots amounted to seven lakhs and 400 *mans* in weight, besides wearing apparel and fine clothes of Sus, respecting which old men said that they never remembered to have seen so fine, soft and embroidered. Among the booty was a house of white silver, like to the houses of rich men, the length of which was thirty yards and the breadth fifteen. It could be taken to pieces and put together again. And there was a canopy made of the linen of Rum, forty yards long and twenty broad, supported on two golden and two silver poles, which had been cast in moulds."

The Hindushahi kingdom had now shrunk to a small principality, yet Anandapala, its brave ruler, did not lose his spirits. In fact, his repeated reverses made him all the more determined to resist the enemy to the bitter end. He shifted his capital to Nandanah, situated on the northern spur of the Salt Range. He gathered a small army and made an attempt to consolidate his position in the Salt Range region. He died here a peaceful death and was succeeded by his son, Trilochanapala. The new ruler, like his father, had no peace, for Mahmud went on gradually advancing and, in 1014 A.D., captured Nandanah after a brief siege in which Trilochanapala's son, Bhimapala, played an important part. After this defeat Trilochanapala took shelter in Kashmir. But Mahmud pursued him there and defeated a combined army of Trilochanapala and his new ally, Tunga, the commander of the Kashmir ruler. Mahmud did not consider it safe to penetrate into Kashmir, but Trilochanapala, too, did not like to end his days as a refugee in Kashmir. His ambition was to rule over the Panjab, his ancestral kingdom, and, therefore, he returned to the eastern part of the Panjab and established himself in the Sivalik hills. He entered into an alliance with the Chandela ruler of Bundelkhand, named Vidyadhar, who was one of the most powerful princes in northern India. Mahmud wanted to break this alliance and with that end in view he came to India once again in 1009 A.D. and defeated Trilochanapala in a battle near the Rama Ganga. Trilochanapala had now only nominal territory to rule over. The decline in his fortunes gave rise to dissensions among his followers, and he was assassinated by some of them in 1021-22 A.D. He was succeeded by his son, Bhimapala, who was but a petty chieftain. He died in 1026 A.D., and with him came to an end

the once glorious and mighty Hindushahi dynasty of north-western Hindustan.

The decline and decay of the Hindushahi kingdom, which was the first to bear the brunt of the Turkish onslaught, enabled Mahmud to penetrate into the heart of Hindustan. First of all he seiged, in 1004 A.D., the fort of Bhatinda which lay on the route from the north-west into the rich Ganga valley. It was bravely defended by the local ruler, named Bijai Rai, but Mahmud's superior military strength succeeded in capturing it. All the inhabitants of the place, except those who became converts to Islam, were put to the sword. A huge booty was captured. Next, he decided to cover the flank of the Hindushahi territory so as not to leave the possibility of any danger from that side threatening his line of communication or the rear of the army of invasion. That was why he decided to conquer Multan from Fateh Daud, the Karmathian, in 1006 A.D., as already related.

In 1009 A.D. Mahmud defeated Anandapala near Waihand and captured Nagarkot. In the same year he acquired possession of Narainpur in the modern district of Alwar. This place had great commercial importance and had become the emporium of foreign articles from Central Asia as well as indigenous ones from the various parts of our country. In 1014 A.D. Mahmud started from Ghazni in order to capture the sacred city of Thaneshwar, hallowed by the temple of Chakraswami. On his way to the place he was encountered by a Hindu ruler who inflicted a very heavy loss on Mahmud's army; but, when he reached Thaneshwar, he was pleasantly surprised to find that the people offered no resistance whatever. Mahmud plundered the city and sent the image of Chakraswami to Ghazni where it was cast in the public square.

Between 1015 and 1021 A D. Mahmud made two unsuccessful attempts to conquer Kashmir, but he was baffled both the times. At last he gave up the idea of enslaving that Happy Valley.

Owing to the annihilation of the Hindushahi kingdom the flood-gates of Turkish invasions were opened up to submerge the very heart of Hindustan. Eager to exploit the opportunity to the best advantage, Mahmud now directed his march towards the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. He started from Ghazni in 1018 A.D. and proceeded towards Mathura which was one of the most thickly populated and wealthy cities. It was, moreover, the Hindu Bethelehem,

being the birth-place of Shri Krishna. Mahmud found it a well-protected city, beautified by an array of imposing temples; but the garrison made no attempt to defend this holy city or its artistic shrines. The invading army destroyed many temples and captured immense treasure that had been accumulated there for generations. An idea of the splendour of Mathura and the destruction wrought by the Muslim fanatical invader can be had from a description of that city given by Utbi who says : "He (Mahmud) saw a city of wonderful fabric and conception, so that one might say there is a building of paradise, but its accidents or qualities could only come by the aid of the infernals, and an intelligent man would hardly receive favourably the account of it.....Around it.....they had placed 1,000 castles built of stones which they had made idol temples..... And in the midst of the city they had built a temple higher than all, to delineate the beauty and decoration of which the pen of all writers and the pencils of all painters would be powerless, and would not be able to attain to the power fixing their minds upon it and considering it." In the Memoir which the Sultan wrote of his journey he thus declares : "If any one should undertake to build a fabric like that he would expend thereon one lakh packets of a thousand *dinar*, and would not complete it in 200 years, with the assistance of the most ingenious architects." These temples, according to Utbi, contained valuable idols of pure gold, five of which were of the height of five cubits, and in one of which there was a jacinth of the value of more than 50,000 *dinars*. Another idol had a sapphire of one solid piece, of azure water, of the value of 400 fine *miskals*. The invaders acquired a huge treasure buried under the feet of many an idol. They got from the feet of one idol as much treasure as was of the value of four lakh *miskals* of gold. There were many idols of silver which, too, were equally costly. Mahmud devastated the entire city and plundered it from one corner to the other. Vrindavan witnessed the same scene of plunder and arson, massacre and rape.

From Mathura Mahmud proceeded to Kanauj which was the imperial seat of northern India since the days of the great Harsha. It was ruled by Rajyapala, the last Gurjara-Pratihara ruler, who fled as soon as he heard of the news of Mahmud's approach. The city was besieged and conquered without much resistance. It witnessed the same plunder and massacre that the holy city of Mathura

had already seen. Here, too, Mahmud acquired treasure and booty 'beyond all calculation'. After this he returned to Ghazni, conquering a few small forts on the way.

The desecration and destruction of the beautiful temples of the holy Mathura touched the conscience of some of the notable leaders, prominent among whom was the Chandela ruler of Bundelkhand. This notable chief (who is variously called Ganda or Vidyadhar), made an attempt to organise a league of some prominent rulers for the defence of their religion and country. The members of this league were dissatisfied with Rajyapala of Kanauj who had fled from his capital without offering any resistance to the invader. So they attacked Rajyapala and defeated and killed him. This brought Mahmud once again to our country, for he was naturally anxious to prevent the formation of a league against him. Starting from Ghazni at the end of 1019 A.D., he met opposition from Trilochanapala of the Hindushahi dynasty. Trilochanapala was defeated and Mahmud proceeded towards Bundelkhand. The Chandela prince tried to obstruct his passage and met him at the head of a powerful army. But, for some unrecorded reason, he left the field during the night, and Mahmud, who was about to give way to despair at the sight of so big a force, ravaged the Chandela territory and became the master of an enormous booty. He returned to Ghazni in 1022.

Towards the end of the same year he returned to India to crush the power of the Chandelas. While on his way to Kalinjar, an important Chandela fortress, he tried to capture Gwalior, the ruler of which was one of the feudatories of the Chandela prince; but Gwalior was so formidable a fortress that it could not be captured. Mahmud did not like to be delayed on the way and so he made peace with the Kachhawaha ruler of that place and resumed his journey to Kalinjar. Kalinjar was besieged, but it could not be easily captured. The siege lasted for a long time and Mahmud, anxious to return to Ghazni, made peace with the Chandela prince who agreed to the payment of a tribute in the form of 300 elephants. It is said that the Chandel ruler even composed a poem in praise of the invader which so pleased Mahmud that he rewarded him with the government of fifteen fortresses. After this peace he returned to Ghazni with his spoils.

Mahmud's last famous expedition to Hindustan was that to

Somanath. It is said that the Brahmans of the Somanath temple, situated on the coast of Kathiawar, had boasted that Lord Somanath was displeased with other dieties; that was why they had been sacked and broken to pieces by Mahmud, the Idol-breaker. It was this vaunt which is said to have been responsible for Mahmud's resolve to attack Somanath. Starting from Ghazni on 17th October, 1024 A.D., with the biggest army that he had so far commanded, he reached Multan on 20th November. He took elaborate precautions on the way, for his route lay through the inhospitable desert of Rajputana. Every trooper had to carry with him food, water and fodder for seven days. Besides this Mahmud had arranged to have provisions and water for the entire army sufficient for the duration of the march through the desert, which was loaded on 30,000 camels. On his arrival at Anhilwara in January, 1025 A.D., Mahmud was pleasantly surprised to learn that Raja Bhima Deo, with most of his followers, had fled from the place. Those who had remained behind were defeated and plundered. The people in the town and in the shrine of Somanath, however, stuck to their places, believing that they would be absolutely safe owing to the protection given to them by Lord Somanath. Mahmud captured the place without much difficulty and ordered a general slaughter in which more than 50,000 persons are said to have perished. The idol of Somanath was broken to pieces which were sent to Ghazni, Mecca and Madina and cast in streets and the staircases of chief mosques to be trodden by the Muslims going there for their prayers. This idol was considered to be one of the great wonders of the place. "It was in the middle of the temple, without anything to support it from below or to suspend it from above. It was held in the highest honour amongst the Hindus, and whoever beheld it floating in the air was struck with amazement whether he was a Musalman or an infidel. Mahmud ordered the loadstones in the canopy to be removed. The idol, therefore, fell to the ground. It was then broken to pieces." It is said that the value of the spoils found in the temple exceeded twenty lakhs of *dinars*. Laden with this rich booty, Mahmud returned to Ghazni through Sindh. His last expedition was undertaken only against the Jats of Sindh who had harassed him during his return march from Somanath to Ghazni in the previous year. This ended his Indian career. He died in 1030 A.D.

An estimate of Mahmud

Mahmud was one of the greatest Muslim kings of Asia. He ruled over a vast dominion which extended from Iraq and the Caspian Sea to the Ganga and was more extensive than the empire of the Caliph of Baghdad. This empire was practically created by him. He had inherited from his father the provinces of Ghazni and Khurasan only. Mahmud was a thorough-going despot in whose hands were concentrated all power and authority. His ministers were his servants and creatures who could be appointed and dismissed at will. Mahmud's will had the force of law. He was the chief executive and judicial authority of his kingdom and he was also his own commader-in-chief. His powers and prerogatives were limited only by the customary Muslim law and by the fear of a military rising. But Mahmud discharged his duties in his home kingdom successfully and maintained law and order. These achievements entitle him to a high place among the monarchs of the time and show that he was gifted with considerable administrative ability.

Mahmud was a brave soldier and a great general. It is said that he was not gifted with extraordinary personal prowess, but he was fearless and extremely intrepid. As a general his success lay in making a clever use of the extant material and in infusing a new life into the old system then in existence. He was a judge of human character and understood and appreciated the qualities of his subordinates and troops and thus he made each individual contribute to his success in the manner in which he liked and to the extent to which each man was capable of contributing. He was a born leader of men. His army was not a homogeneous force; it was composed of diverse racial and religious elements, such as Arabs, Afghans, Turks and Hindus. But his able generalship welded them all into a powerful unit. It is sometimes supposed that Mahmud displayed conspicuous military capacity against the then effete Hindus only and hence his generalship has been unduly exaggerated. This is a mistaken view, for we know that he attained equal success in Central Asia and in Persia.

Mahmud was a cultured patron of scholarship and art. He had himself some skill as a poet and a scholar. He beautified the city of Ghazni by erecting stately palaces and mosques, colleges and tombs. He gathered around him scholars of ability and reputation. He held religious and literary discussions with them at his court.

Among the topmost literary lights that thronged the court of Ghazni, the most important were Al Beruni, Firdausi, Unsuri and Farrukhi. His secretary was the famous Utbi, to whose scholarship we owe not a little material for a history of Mahmud and his time. Mahmud founded a university at Ghazni. He also collected brilliant artists from all parts of the Muslim world.

Mahmud enjoyed a reputation for his great sense of justice in his kingdom. According to a great authority, "Mahmud was a just sovereign, a lover of learning, a man of generous nature and a pure faith." He was an orthodox Sunni Musalman punctilious in the observance of his religious rites. He was careful to see that his Muslim subjects did not deviate from Sunni orthodoxy. He punished heresy and persecuted such heretics in Islam as the Karmathians.

According to Professor Muhammad Habib of Aligarh University, Mahmud was not a fanatic and his expeditions against India were not motivated by religion but by love of plunder. The learned Professor concludes by saying that Islam does not sanction plundering raids and vandalism and that Mahmud rendered disservice to his religion by his acts of barbarism in India. That Mahmud was a deeply pious Muslim king and punctilious in the observances of his faith was not a subject of controversy with contemporaries who believed that the ruler of Ghazni was an ideal Islamic monarch. Likewise, contemporary Muslim opinion is unanimous in its belief and assertion that Mahmud not only rendered a great service to his religion by his Indian expeditions, but even exalted Islam. As regards the view that Islam does not sanction vandalism and atrocities of the type committed by Mahmud, it may be said that a student of history is not concerned with the dogmas of a religion. He has to assess their effect on the conduct and actions of its adherents. It is an incontrovertible fact that those who were qualified to interpret the principles of Muslim religion, during the lifetime of Mahmud and for centuries after his death, held the view that that ruler of Ghazni not only did not depart from strict Islamic principles, but glorified them by his conduct in India.

To the Indian world of his day Mahmud was a veritable devil incarnate—a daring bandit, an avaricious plunderer and wanton destroyer of Art. He plundered many dozens of our flourishing cities; he razed to the ground great temples which were wonderful works of art; he carried thousands of innocent women and children into

slavery; he indulged in wanton massacre practically everywhere he went; and, above all, he forcibly converted hundreds of our unwilling people to Islam. A conqueror who leaves behind desolate towns and villages and dead bodies of innocent human beings cannot be remembered by posterity by any other title.

Mahmud was not a ruler so far as India was concerned. He annexed the Panjab after the fall of the Hindushahi dynasty, owing to geographical, military and strategic reasons. Without occupying this part of the country his line of communications would have been unsafe and he would not have been in a position to move fearlessly into the heart of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. Yet Mahmud became the founder of the Turkish power in India, for he paved the way for the establishment of the future Sultanate of Delhi. Mahmud was not a statesman. His ability even as a ruler has been exaggerated. Professor S. R. Sharma calls him an angel to his own people. On the other hand, he did little beyond giving his dominions peace and order. No permanent institution and no nation-building activity was associated with his name. If he did a little for education, it was not for the people at large, but for a select class and for personal glorification. Lane-Poole is right in concluding: "He left his dominion so ill-knitted together that they began to fall assunder as soon as he was no longer alive to guard them by his vigilant activity." His inordinate fondness for wealth was a blot on his character, as it weakened rather than strengthened his usefulness and his reputation. The story of his refusal to pay Firdausi a gold piece for every verse of his celebrated *Shah Nama* to which he was pledged, and that of his death-bed sobs at the thought that he was leaving his riches behind, may not have been literally true, but they do reflect the popular opinion of his character long after he was dead.

Inspite of these faults he must be called a monarch of outstanding ability, if not of character. Professor Habïb is right when he says that Mahmud's pre-eminence among his contemporaries was due to his ability and not to his character.

Successors of Mahmud

Mahmud seems to have been conscious of the unwieldiness of his empire. Before his death he divided it among his two sons, Masud and Muhammad; but there was no peaceful succession to his throne. As soon as his eyes were closed in death, there was a war of succession between them. Masud gained the upper hand. He

defeated his brother, blinded him and threw him into prison. Masud reigned for ten years, from 1030 to 1040 A.D., and was invested with the title of Sultan by the Khalifa. Though Masud was gifted with great personal prowess, he was badly defeated by the Seljuqs in 1040 A.D. near Merv and compelled to flee towards Lahore. The province of the Panjab had been ruled, during the later days of Mahmud's reign and throughout that of Masud, by deputies. The administration of the province was disorganised by the disloyalty, selfishness and inefficiency of Muslim officers. Masud was, however, ably and loyally served by a Hindu general, named Tilak, who had risen from obscurity to the rank of a minister in the time of his (Masud's) father. The affairs of the Panjab, inspite of Tilak's loyalty and devotion, were not going on well when Masud fled to Lahore for shelter. His defeat at the hands of the Seljuqs had disorganised his army. His troops mutinied on the way, dethroned and handed him over to his blind brother, Muhammad, who now crowned himself king. Masud was put to death by the new ruler. A little later, Masud's son, Maudud, organised a party of his own with the help of some prominent nobles. He defeated Muhammad and put him and his son to death.

Maudud was a weak ruler. He ruled from 1040 to 1049 A.D. On his death there was again a war of succession, and one after another, a series of incompetent rulers sat upon the throne at Ghazni. The reigns of these weaklings were short and inglorious. Besides the trouble in the Panjab, these rulers were constantly menaced by the rising power of the Seljuqs. The greatest danger to the decadent house of Ghazni, however, came from the principality of Ghur. The family feud between these two ruling houses, namely, those of Ghazni and Ghur, developed into a conflict which reached a climax in 1155 A.D. when Ala-ud-din Husain of Ghur invaded Ghazni, subjected it to thorough plunder and burnt it so completely that he earned the nickname of *Jahan Soz*, 'the World Burner'. Ala-ud-din slaughtered the people of Ghazni in thousands and enslaved its women and children. All its buildings were dug up and destroyed except the tomb of Mahmud. In the forth quarter of the 12th century A.D. the house of Mahmud was extinguished by Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Ghuri.

The Panjab under the Ghaznavides

Mahmud annexed the Panjab whose administration he

entrusted to the care of a governor. This was, thus, our third province, Sindh and Multan being the first two, to have passed into the hands of Muslim invaders from the north-west. Mahmud may be said to have been the first Turk who ruled over a province of our country and became the founder of a dynasty. His successors, after they had lost their hereditary kingdom of Ghazni, sought protection at Lahore and ruled there till the extinction of his dynasty in 1186 A.D.

The administration of the Panjab suffered from progressive deterioration owing to the disloyalty and incompetence of the Turkish officers during the reigns of Mahmud's successors. The governor, Ariyaruq, was found guilty of misappropriation of the royal revenue. He was summoned to Ghazni by Masud and put to death. He was succeeded by the notorious Ahmad Nialtigin who was innocent of a sense of honesty as well as of experience of civil and military affairs. This man quarrelled with the *qazi*, Abul Hasan, and led, in 1033 A.D., a plundering expedition to Banaras from where he brought enormous wealth. Masud was alarmed at the reports of Nialtigin's pretensions and mismanagement and sent his Hindu general, Tilak, a handsome and accomplished soldier and a man of letters who had risen to a high rank in Mahmud's service, to chastise the delinquent. In the contest that followed Ahmad Nialtigin was killed and his head was sent by Tilak to Masud, who appointed, in 1036 A.D., his own son, Majdud, governor in the vacant office. In 1037 A.D. Masud in person came to India and besieged Hansi and stormed it on January 1, 1039 A.D. indulging in the massacre of the innocent population and enslaving many women and children. In 1040 A.D., Masud, having been badly defeated by the Seljuqs, abandoned Ghazni and retreated towards Lahore. He was, however, waylaid and imprisoned by his own followers who placed his brother, Muhammad, on the throne. Maudud was the next ruler (1041-42), who defeated and killed Nami, governor of Lahore, and occupied the province.

The Panjab remained a part of the Ghazni empire under Maudud; but the people of the province had little regard for his rule. In 1044 A.D. Mahipala, the raja of Delhi, wrested Hansi, Thaneshwar and Kangara from the Ghaznavide governor and re-established Hindu worship in those places. He even besieged Lahore, but had to return without success. In 1048 A.D. Maudud appointed

his sons, Mahmud and Mansur, governors of Lahore and Peshawar respectively; but corruption and inefficiency continued as before. Maudud's death in December, 1049 A.D. led to a protracted intrigue and palace disturbance. One after another, there came to the throne of Ghazni a number of weaklings who were rulers in name only. One of them, Ibrahim, enjoyed a long and comparatively peaceful reign of forty-two years and died in August, 1099 A.D. His son, Masud III, reigned for seventeen years. Sometime after his death which occurred in 1115 A.D., the Seljuqs intervened in a succession quarrel and supported Bahram against Arsalam who was defeated and put to death in 1118 A.D. His son and successor, Khusrav Shah, was defeated and driven from Ghazni by the Ghuzz Turkomans about 1160 A.D. He fled to the Panjab, for that province alone remained in the hands of Ghaznavides. On his death, in 1160 A.D., the throne of the Panjab passed to his son, Malik Khusrav, who was a mild and voluptuous ruler and allowed the district officers of his dwindling kingdom to exercise semi-independent authority. A new danger for the Ghaznavides now made its appearance. Slice after slice the territory of the Panjab was conquered by Muhammad of Ghur, who was assigned the Jagir of Ghazni by his brother, Ghiyas-ud-din, until in 1186 A.D., he imprisoned Malik Khusrav and occupied the entire Panjab. Since 1186 A.D. Khusrav was kept a prisoner by Muhammad Ghur and was put to death in 1192 A.D.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Yamini Dynasty

Sabuktigin

(1) Mahmud (of Ghazni) — Ismail

(2) Muhammad — (3) Masud I — (7) Abdur Rashid

Majdud — (4) Maudud — (6) Ali — (8) Farrukhzad — (9) Ibrahim

(5) Masud II — Mahmud — Mansur — (10) Masud III

(11) Sherzad — (12) Arsalan — (13) Bahram Shah

(14) Khusrav Shah

(15) Khusrav Malik
(Imprisoned and murdered by Muhammad Ghuri)

3

INDIA ON THE EVE OF MUHAMMAD OF GHUR'S INVASION

In the last quarter of the twelfth century A.D. there were three foreign kingdoms in north-western India. They were the Panjab, Multan and Sindh.

The Ghaznavide Panjab

Since its conquest and annexation by Mahmud in the first quarter of the eleventh century, the Panjab had remained an integral part of the Ghaznavide empire until its extinction in 1186 A.D. As has already been related, Khusrav Shah, driven from his ancestral home by the Ghuzz Turks, sought refuge in the Panjab. From that time onwards his successors abandoned Ghazni altogether and made the Panjab their home and Lahore their capital. After Sindh the Panjab may be considered to have become the next Muslim kingdom in India. This kingdom included Peshawar and Sialkot in the north and the Hindu state of Jammu lay to the north-east, while its boundary on the south and the south-west was constantly fluctuating. The Chauhan ruler, Prithvi Raj I, fought with the Muslims. His successor Ajayaraj lost Nagor to Bahlim, a Ghaznavide officer, in 1112 A.D. Vigraharaj III recovered Hansi from the Ghaznavide Sultan of the Panjab in 1167 A.D. and his successor Prithvi Raj II fortified it as an outpost against the Turks. A few years later, Prithvi Raj II wrested Bhatinda, situated further north, and thus shifted the Chauhan frontier in the north to very near modern Firozpur. The Turkish kingdom of the Panjab suffered from decline and deterioration during the reigns of Mahmud's successors. Corruption and inefficiency were the rule. Khusrav Malik, the last ruler of the Ghaznavide dynasty, was a pleasure-loving, worthless prince, who allowed his servants to exercise practically independent power. Inspite of this natural decay, sometimes an enterprising commander of the sultan's army would undertake a distant raid into the territory of a neighbouring Hindu chief, devastate it and bring valuable spoils; but such a daring character in the effete Ghaznavides was an exception and

not the rule. In fact, the Ghaznavide sultan of Lahore lived in daily fear of the Rajput attack on his kingdom.

Multan under the Karmathians

The province of Multan, situated in the upper valley of the Indus, was ruled over by Qaramitah Muslims who were Shias. This province had been conquered by Mahmud, but it regained its independence under the Qaramitahs after that monarch's death. Uch also seems to have been a part of the Qaramitah kingdom.

Sindh under the Sumras

South of Multan lay Lower Sindh with its capital at Debal. Mahmud had conquered these parts also, but not long after his death a local tribe, called the Sumras, re-asserted its independence. The Sumras were Muhammadans of an obscure origin. Like the Qaramitahs they too were Shia Muslims.

The Rajputs : their virtues and faults

The rest of India was ruled by the Rajputs who claimed descent from the ancient Kshatriyas and traced their pedigree to the Sun and the Moon. Historians, however, are of opinion that the Rajputs were a mixed race, having in their veins the blood of the ancient Kshatriyas and also that of some foreign invaders who eventually found a place in Hindu society. The Rajputs were a brave people. They excelled their adversary, the Turk, in reckless bravery and chivalric sense of honour. They prided themselves on their swordsmanship and made warfare their hobby. Their great qualities were, however, marred by the presence of clannishness among them. The structure of society in which they lived and had their being was essentially feudal. Their thirst for military glory made them subordinate other activities to this their all-absorbing passion, and this proved to be the cause of their downfall.

The Chalukyas of Anhilwara

The most important Rajput dynasty in western India, so close to the three north-western provinces held by foreigners, was the Chalukya ruling family of Anhilwara. Jaya Singh Siddharaja (1102-1143) raised this dynasty to eminence and conquered a large portion of the Paramara kingdom of Malwa. He reduced the Guhilot kingdom of Chittor, and rounded off his conquest by the reduction of Nadol and Girnar in Kathiawar. He came into clash with the Chauhan ruler of Ajmer and the warfare between these two houses

eventually reduced the Chalukyas to a second-rate power. One by one, Malwa, Chittor and other parts of western and southern Rajputana re-asserted their independence. Only Gujarat and Kathiawar remained under the Chalukyas. Moola Raj II was the Chalukya ruler at the time of Muhammad of Ghur's invasion.

The Chauhans of Ajmer

The next important Rajput power was that of the Chauhans of Ajmer. This dynasty was founded by Samanta. Ajayapala founded Ajmer in the eleventh century A.D. For a brief period under Arno Raja (c. 1153-1164) the Chauhans had to acknowledge the Chalukya suzerainty. Very soon after, however, the Chauhans regained their independence and even rose to eminence and subjugated north-eastern Rajputana. Visala Deva (Vigraharaja III) captured Delhi about 1150 A.D. from the Tomaras and, a little later, he captured Hansi from the Ghaznavides. An important ruler of this dynasty was Prithviraj II who ruled from 1167 to 1169 A.D. His son was the famous Prithviraj III (1178-1193 A.D.) popularly known as Rai Pithora. He conquered Mahoba from the Chandela ruler, Paramardi. He was reputed to have been a great warrior and fighter. He was, however, not on good terms with his neighbours.

The Gahadwaras of Kanauj

The most important Rajput ruling family at this time was the Gahadwara dynasty of Kanauj. Originally the Gahadwara kingdom consisted of Kashi (Banaras), Kaushala (Awadh), Kaushik (Allahabad region) and Indraprastha (Delhi region), but gradually the Gahadwaras expanded in all directions and, by a systematic policy of conquest, made Kanauj one of the most extensive kingdoms in the country. Govinda Chand was one of the most notable rulers of this dynasty. During his reign the eastern boundary of Kanauj was pushed to Patna. Gobinda Chand was succeeded by Vijaya Chand who ruled from about 1155 to 1170 A.D. He continued the policy of aggressive warfare which he had inherited from his predecessors. Jaya Chand, a contemporary of Muhammad of Ghur, was the last ruler of this dynasty.

The Chandelas of Bundelkhand and the Kalachuris of Chedi

Two other Rajput ruling families deserve mention, for they were not only virile, but also in constant warfare with their neighbours. They were the Chandelas of Kalinjar and Mahoba and the

Kalachuris of Chedi. The Chandelas established their dominion over the southern parts of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab, including western Bundelkhand in the tenth century A.D. Madan Varma, a noble ruler of this dynasty, defeated the Paramaras of Malwa and held his own against Siddharaja of Gujarat. He defeated the Kalachuris, who ruled at Tripuri in the modern Jabalpur district of the Madhya Pradesh. The Kalachuris seemed to have ultimately become feudatories to the Chandela prince about the end of the twelfth century. But the Chandelas themselves were finally beaten by the Gahadwaras. The last important king of this dynasty, named Paramardi Deva, was defeated by Prithviraj II of Ajmer and compelled to cede a portion of his territory to the Chauhans. At the opening of our period the Chandela dominion comprised Mahoba, Khajuraho, Kalinjar and Ajaigarh. It probably included Jhansi also.

The Paramaras of Malwa with their capital at Dhar, so powerful and famous in the time of their greatest ruler, Bhoja (c. 1010-1055), had sunk low in the twelfth century. The representative of this dynasty at the time of Muhammad of Ghur's invasion was an insignificant prince and a virtual vassal of the Chalukyas of Gujarat.

The Palas of North Bangal

In eastern India there were two well-known Rajput kingdoms. They were the Pala empire and the Sena kingdom. Once upon a time the Pala empire included the whole of Bangal and the whole of Bihar. But it was fast undergoing decay. In the twelfth century Ramapala, a king of this dynasty, was able to revive for a short period the imperial glory of his ancestors by a number of victories in Utkal, Kalinga and Kamarupa. After his death, however, the Pala dynasty relapsed into lethargy. The Brahmaputra Valley declared its independence. Similarly, southern Bangal cut itself off and everywhere petty governors not only raised their heads, but also behaved as independent chiefs. The later rulers of this dynasty, such as Kumarapala (1126-1130) and Madanapala (1130-1150), were weaklings and under them the once formidable Pala empire dwindled into a small kingdom confined to north Bangal. They lost most of Bihar. In Gaya and Hazaribagh district new dynasties came into existence.

The Sena kingdom of Bangal

The Sena family profited most owing to the decay and downfall of the Pala empire. The Senas are supposed to have come from southern India and established themselves in eastern India in the eleventh century A.D. One of the members of this family, named Vijaya Sena (1097-1159), seized East Bangal. He obtained possession of North Bangal also. He was in constant warfare with the rulers of Kamarupa, Kalinga and South Bangal and is reputed to have obtained victories over them. He is said to have defeated Nanya Deva of Mithila (North Bihar). The later rulers of this dynasty were Ballala Sena (1159-1170) and his son, Lakshmana Sena (1170-1206). Their dominion consisted of North and East Bangal and included Mithila and, perhaps, some districts lying on the western border of Mithila. Lakshmana Sena's administration was torn by internal dissensions and weakened by his old age.

It is clear from the foregoing narrative that northern India was divided into many small kingdoms which were on terms of hostility with one another. More than one dynasty claimed pre-eminence and paramountcy over others. This claim could be decided by sword alone, and hence throughout our period the Rajput rulers of the north engaged themselves in constant warfare with their neighbours and paid little attention to the developments in the north-western provinces of India which were in foreign hands, namely, the Panjab, Multan and Sindh. Owing to this state of affairs it was not possible for them, much less for the Indian people (for the people hardly existed as such in that age), to combine against a foreign invader. Was it not still more difficult for them to make a common effort to expel the Turk from the Panjab, Multan and Sindh, where he had secured a permanent lodgement ?

The administrative, economic, cultural and social conditions had hardly witnessed any fundamental change since the eleventh century. In fact, our civilization had become practically static and, hence, was inclined to a downward trend. The reader is referred to the fifth chapter of this volume for a perusal of those conditions.

4

MUHAMMAD OF GHUR

Early history of Ghur

The mountainous district of Ghur is situated in the hills between Ghazni and Herat. In the tenth century A.D. it was an independent principality and was ruled by a Tajik family of Persian origin, known to history as the Shansbani dynasty. Its ruler, Muhammad bin Suri, was defeated by Mahmud of Ghazni in or about 1009 A.D., and was reduced to the position of a vassal. Since that date the ruler of Ghur became a feudatory of Ghazni. The principality of Ghur, however, took full advantage of the decline of Ghazni after the death of Mahmud in 1030 A.D. This was made possible by a quarrel between the ruling houses of the two kingdoms. Bahram of Ghazni murdered a prince of Ghur, named Malik Qutub-ud-din Hasan. This roused the wrath of Saif-ud-din Suri, the brother of the deceased, who invaded Ghazni and defeated Bahram. A little later, Bahram retaliated and put Saif-ud-din to death. The quarrel now developed into a family feud, and Ala-ud-din Husain, Saif-ud-din's younger brother, completely devastated and burnt the city of Ghazni, as we have already seen, and earned the nickname of *Jahan Soz*. Ala-ud-din came into clash with Sanjar, the last of the imperial Seljuqs. But he escaped his doom owing to the difficulties the latter was in. Ala-ud-din conquered Bamian, Turkistan, Jerun and Bast and even Gharjistan, in the Valley of the Murghab river. He conquered the city of Herat also. Towards the end of his reign he lost Balkh, Turkistan and Herat, but retained his hold over other parts of his dominions. He died in 1161. He was succeeded by his son, named Saif-ud-din. On his death the principality of Ghur passed to his cousin Ghiyas-ud-din. He recovered Ghazni, which had been lost by his predecessors, and added a number of districts to his dominion. His ambition brought him into conflict with the Khwarizm Shah. Ghiyas-ud-din acquired some initial success over his rival and conquered several districts in the neighbourhood of Khurasan; but, ultimately, the Ghuride ruler was decisively

beaten at Andhkhud. He was allowed to retain possession of Herat and Balkh, only two provinces of his extensive conquest in the north-west. Thus the Ghuride activity in the north-west brought little advantage and the ruler of this dynasty had to turn towards India. Ghiyas-ud-din Muhammad, king of Ghur, appointed his younger brother Shahab-ud-din *Alias* Muiz-ud-din Muhammad to the government of Ghazni in 1173 A.D., when that city was recovered from the Ghuzz Turkomans of Central Asia. The latter was on very friendly terms with his elder brother and gave him complete loyalty and allegiance. Muhammad was an active and enterprising ruler and, although he ruled at Ghazni as almost an independent ruler, he inscribed the name of his brother on his coins and treated him as his suzerain. It is this man, known to us as Muhammad Ghuri, who became the third important Muslim invader of Hindustan.

Causes of Muhammad's invasions

Muhammad of Ghur, ruler of Ghazni, was an ambitious and enterprising prince. He looked upon himself as the heir to the Panjab which had belonged to the empire of Ghazni. A quarrel between his house and that of Ghazni must have prompted him to invade the Panjab, then under a prince of the house of Mahmud, named Khusrav Shah or Khusrav Malik. Moreover, it was necessary to obtain possession of the Panjab in order to fight successfully his chief enemy, the ruler of Khwarizm, with whom, too, the Ghurides had a long-standing conflict. It was not only desirable but necessary to eliminate the enemy in the rear, that is, the Ghaznavide ruler of Lahore and the Karmathians of Multan. That was an age of military glory, and Muhammad of Ghur was fired with the love of conquest and power. Like all able and ambitious men, he wanted to establish a big empire and to acquire wealth and prestige. He was also a pious Muslim and, as such, he considered it to be his duty to bring the message of Muhammad to the Hindus of India and to put an end to idolatry. It must, however, be mentioned that Muhammad of Ghur was more political than religious. His primary aim, therefore, was conquest and not the propagation of Islam, though that was desirable and was to follow as a matter of course.

Conquest of Multan and Sindh

His first invasion was directed against Multan in 1175 A.D. That province was ruled over by Ismailian heretics who were

popularly known as Karmathians. Muhammad captured the city and appointed his own governor. He then pushed on to Uch in Upper Sindh. The story that it was under a Bhatti Rajput, whose queen fell victim to Muhammad of Ghur's intrigue, poisoned her husband and delivered the place to the invader, is disproved by modern research. It is clear that Bhatti Rajputs had never held any part of Sindh and that the ruler of Uch at this time was most probably a Qaramitah Muslim. Uch fell in the same year at Multan, that is, in 1175 A.D., and most probably by stratagem. Desirous of completing the subjugation of the whole of Sindh and annexing it, Muhammad invaded Lower Sindh in 1182 A.D. and compelled its Sumra ruler to acknowledge his suzerainty.

Muhammad defeated at Anhilwara

Muhammad's next expedition was directed against Anhilwara or Patan, the capital of Bhima II, the Vaghela ruler of Gujarat. The chief of Anhilwara was then young in years, but he was brave and dashing and was the master of a big force. He inflicted, in 1178 A.D., a terrible defeat upon Muhammad and drove him away from his country. This produced such an impression upon the invader that he did not threaten Gujarat for twenty years to come.

Acquisition of the Panjab : end of the Ghaznavide rule

Muhammad now realised that it was a mistake to attempt to conquer India through Sindh and Multan. The key to Hindustan lay through the Panjab, and so he changed his tactics and decided to proceed through the Panjab into the heart of our country. He attacked and captured Peshawar from the Ghaznavide ruler of the Panjab in 1179 A.D. Two years later he proceeded against Lahore itself. Khusrav Malik sent the invader costly presents and his own son as a hostage. This easy success must have encouraged Muhammad in his aggression. In 1185 A.D. he again invaded the Panjab and plundered the countryside and occupied the fortress of Sialkot. He repaired this fortress and garrisoned it with his own troops. Khusrav Malik at last realised that the invader was bent upon wresting the whole of the Panjab from his feeble grips and so he exerted himself in self-defence. He made an alliance with the Khokhars, a Hindu tribe of the Salt Range region, who were on bad terms with Chakra Deva, the ruler of Jammu. With their help Khusrav Malik besieged Sialkot, but was driven back by Muhammad's garrison. In 1186 A.D. Muhammad returned to the Panjab and laid siege to Lahore. He had already

made an alliance with Chakra Deva, and he is said to have invaded the Panjab and garrisoned Sialkot in response to an invitation from that Hindu raja. Inspite of the assistance from Jammu under its new ruler, Vijaya Deva, Muhammad did not feel himself powerful enough to take Lahore by force. So he resorted to diplomacy and cunning. He persuaded Khusrav to pay him a visit and guaranteed him safe conduct. In flagrant violation of his plighted word, he seized Khusrav and sent him a prisoner to Gharjistan, where he was put to death by his orders in 1192 A.D. Thus Multan, Sindh and Lahore became parts of the empire of Ghur, and the Ghaznavide rule disappeared from the Panjab. Muhammad's occupation of this province opened the way for further conquests in India.

His contact with Hindustan

Muhammad of Ghur's territory now touched the boundary of the kingdom of Prithviraj, the valiant ruler of Ajmer and Delhi. The Rajputs had some experience of the Muslim Turks since the days of Sabuktigin and Mahmud of Ghazni and seemed to have had a better appreciation than their ancestors of the eleventh century of the aggressive tendencies of their new neighbours, though it will be incorrect to say that they had grown wiser by this contact. They had experience of occasional thrusts by an enterprising commander of the decadent house of Ghazni at Lahore. These thrusts had made the Rajputs alive to the Turkish menace. Some of the Rajput rulers, notably those of Kanauj and Ajmer, had put their armies in proper trim and invaded the outlying districts of the Ghaznavide province of the Panjab. Mention has already been made of the capture of Hansi and of Bhatinda by the Chauhans. In view of this experience, the Rajput rulers of Hindustan could not have been taken by surprise as they were, two centuries before, by the plundering hordes of Mahmud of Ghazni.

Muhammad's defeat at Tarain

The first Rajput ruler who felt the pressure from the invading hordes from Ghur was the Chauhan prince of Ajmer who ruled the territory from Ajmer to Delhi and was, therefore, responsible for the defence of our north-western frontier. The Chauhans had fortified important towns on this frontier right up to Bhatinda in order to be able to gaurd the entrance into Hindustan against any possible invasion from the north-west. Muhammad of Ghur made his first

attack on the fortress of Bhatinda and besieged it in 1189 A.D. Prithviraj did not seem to have been ready, and the attack probably was a surprise attack. The garrison was defeated and had to surrender, Muhammad stationed his own men in the fortress under a commander, named Zia-ud-din, and, when the sultan was about to return, Prithviraj appeared in the vicinity of the fortress to recover it. Prithviraj's army is said to have comprised two lakhs of cavalry and thirty thousand elephants, which is clearly an exaggeration. Muhammad had to turn round to face the valiant Chauhan and a battle was fought near the village of Tarain, situated near Bhatinda, in 1191 A.D. Prithviraj's troops attacked the sultan with vigour and inflicted upon him a terrible defeat. Muhammad himself was wounded seriously. He was helped to ride his horse by one of his Khalji officers and was taken away from the field. Prithviraj besieged the fortress of Bhatinda, but it took him thirteen months to recover it from Zia-ud-din, its commandant.

Prithviraj defeated at Tarain

This was Muhammad of Ghur's second defeat at the hands of the Hindu rulers of Hindustan. It caused him greater humiliation than the one he had suffered at the hands of Bhima Deo II of Anhilwara. On return to Ghazni, he "never slumbered in ease, nor walked but in sorrow and anxiety." He made furious preparations for avenging the defeat and, when these were complete, he started again for Hindustan at the head of a select force which consisted of one lakh and twenty thousand picked cavalry. On reaching Lahore, he sent an envoy, named Qiwam-ul-mulk, to Prithviraj, asking for his submission. This was done in order to gain time for completing his preparations, to cajole Prithviraj and to keep him off his guard. Muhammad gained his first objective. The brave ruler of the Chauhans could not, however, be easily befooled. He rushed towards Bhatinda and appealed to some of his brother Rajput rulers to hurry up to his assistance. With a combined force numbering, according to Farishta, five lakhs of horse and three thousand elephants (which must be greatly exaggerated), Prithviraj met the invader on the same field (Tarain). Muhammad divided his army into five divisions, four of which were sent to attack the Rajput army on all sides, while the fifth was kept in reserve. "The Sultan," writes Minhaj-us-Siraj, "drew up in battle array, leaving his main body in the rear, with the banners, canopies and elephants, to the number

of several divisions. His plan of attack being formed, he advanced quietly. The light-armed horsemen were made into four divisions of ten thousand and were directed to advance and harass the enemy on all sides, on the right and on the left, in the front and in the rear, with their arrows. When the enemy collected his forces to attack, they were to support each other, and to charge at full speed. By these tactics the infidels were worsted, the Almighty gave us the victory over them, and they fled." The Rajputs fought with great gallantry, but Muhammad of Ghur's tactics proved to be too great for them when they were tired as the result of an offensive directed on them from all sides. Muhammad despatched his reserve at the end of the day to launch a vigorous attack on our exhausted troops. This proved to be too much even for the Rajputs who gave way. Prithviraj's chief lieutenant, Khande Rai, who had been responsible for defeating and wounding Muhammad of Ghur in 1191 A.D., was killed. Prithviraj became dejected. He alighted from his elephant and mounted a horse and made an attempt to escape from the field, but was captured near the town of Sarasuti, and Muhammad of Ghur achieved victory.

There is more than one version about the time and manner of Prithviraj's death. According to Minhaj-us-Siraj, he was captured and 'sent to Hell'. Hasan Nizami, however, tells us that he was taken to Ajmer where he was put to death sometime after, as he was found guilty of treason. This view seems to be correct. There are in existence some of the coins of Prithviraj which bear the Sanskrit superscription 'Hammira', indicating that he had accepted Muhammad's suzerainty and had lived for some time after the second battle of Tarain. Chand Bardai's version that he was taken to Ghazni and put to death for having slain Muhammad of Ghur himself has no foundation in fact.

Results of the second battle of Tarain

The second battle of Tarain is a landmark in the history of India. It proved to be a very decisive contest and ensured the ultimate success of Muhammad of Ghur against Hindustan. The Chauhan military power was completely broken. Immediately after his success at Tarain, the Ghur captured Hansi, Kuhram and Sarasuti, which were places of military importance. They were now garrisoned by the Turks. Muhammad of Ghur planted a foreign Turkish kingdom in the heart of Hindustan for the first time in our

history. He, however, realized that, for various reasons, it was not possible to take direct charge of the administration of Prithviraj's dominions. Therefore, he recognised Prithviraj's son on condition of his accepting the position of a vassal. Similarly the Tomara prince, who was Khande Rai's successor, was allowed to remain in charge of Delhi. A Turkish force was, however, established at Indraprastha, near Delhi, in the charge of Muhammad's most trusted lieutenant, named Qutub-ud-din Aibak. In all the conquered places, Hindu temples were destroyed and mosques erected in their places. In accordance with the Muslim practice, Islam was installed everywhere as the religion of the state. At Ajmer idol temples were demolished and the famous college of the Chauhan ruler, Vigraharaja, was converted into a mosque.

Bulandshahr, Meerut and Delhi acquired by Aibak

After this remarkable success Muhammad of Ghur returned to Ghazni, leaving Aibak in charge of his new conquest. During his absence there was a serious rising in Ajmer. Obviously, the Chauhans made an attempt to recover their independence and to drive away the Turks. A Hindu chief, called Jatwan, besieged the Turkish garrison at Hansi. Aibak proceeded to the relief of the garrison there. He defeated the rebel chief, pursued him and slew him at Bagar. Next, Qutub-ud-din Aibak captured Baran or Bulandshahr from the Dor Rajputs by treachery. The Dor chief, Chandrasena, put up a very brave resistance, but one of his relations, named Ajaipala, who had been won over by Aibak by a huge bribe, assisted the enemy and brought about the ruin of his family. Aibak followed up this success and captured Meerut where he established a Turkish garrison. In 1193 A.D. Aibak captured Delhi from the Tomara ruler on the pretext that the latter harboured hostile designs against the Turkish army of occupation. From that year (1193 A.D.) Delhi became the capital of Muhammad of Ghur's possessions in India.

Second rising in Ajmer

Our people had not taken kindly to the Turkish rule, for it was foreign and Muslim. The spirited Hari Raja, brother of Prithviraj, seized the occasion of Muhammad's absence and besieged Ranthambhor where Qutub-ud-din Aibak had established a garrison under Qiwam-ul-mulk. Some of the Chauhans drove away Prithviraj's son, who had accepted the Turkish vassalage, from Ajmer. Aibak was obliged to proceed against the Chauhans and he succeeded

in relieving both Ranthambhor and Ajmer and restoring his master's Chauhan vassal to the throne of Ajmer. The valiant Hari Raja, however, could not be defeated. At this very time occurred another rising of the Dor Rajputs and it obliged Aibak to cross the Yamuna a second time and capture Koil (Aligarh) in 1194 A.D.

Defeat of Jai Chand of Kanauj

When Aibak was busy in quelling Rajput rebellions, Muhammad of Ghur once again marched his army into Hindustan. This time his object was to fight Jai Chand, the ruler of Kanauj and Banaras who has been described by the Muslim writers to have been the greatest Hindu king of that time. On his near approach Qutub-ud-din joined him with the Delhi troops and, at the head of the united force, Muhammad proceeded towards Banaras. Jai Chand, the Gahadwara king, who had disputed with Prithviraj the overlordship of northern India and had not assisted the latter against the Turkish invader from Ghur, was compelled to fight single-handed. His scouts had a skirmish with the enemy, but were defeated. Then Jai Chand himself moved forward and met the invader near Chandawar on the Yamuna between Kanauj and Etawah. He launched a very vigorous attack on the enemy who was perplexed and was about to break down when the Raja was struck in the eye by a fatal arrow and killed. This threw his army into confusion and Muhammad of Gur was lucky enough to gain victory. He took immediate advantage of the confusion in the rank of our army caused by Jai Chand's death, rallied his men and turned the confusion into a rout. This occurred in 1194 A.D. The victory of Chandawar, like that of Tarain, added a great kingdom to Muhammad of Ghur's empire. The victor immediately proceeded to Banaras and occupied it. This place was Jai Chand's favourite residence and here Muhammad acquired a huge treasure which he carried on 1,400 camels. Some other important towns in the Raja's dominions were also captured without delay, as they contained the Gahadwara treasures. The capital city of Kanauj, however, could not be taken till 1198 A.D. The descendants of Jai Chand continued to rule over a fraction of their kingdom which Muhammad did not consider himself powerful enough to occupy at this time. It seems that even Kanauj was recovered by the Gahadwaras a few years after its conquest.

Third rising in Ajmer

Muhammad now returned to Ghazni. During his absence

there were many rebellions which Qutub-ud-din was required to quell. The first of them occurred in the vicinity of Koil (Aligarh). It was due, probably, to the independent spirit of the Dor Rajputs. Qutub-ud-din had to proceed from Delhi to the relief of the garrison there, which work he accomplished with success. The next rebellion occurred in and around Ajmer. This was the third attempt of the Rajputs, particularly the Chauhans, to put an end to their slavery and to drive away the Turks from Rajasthan. The soul of the rebellion was the redoubtable Hari Raja, the hero of the two previous exploits, who drove out his nephew from Ajmer and made preparations to attack Delhi. Aibak was obliged to move quickly towards Ajmer so as to intercept the Rajputs who were on their march towards Delhi. Jhat Rai, the commander of this army, afraid of being overtaken by Aibak, retreated and took shelter in the strong fort of Ajmer where he was joined by Hari Raja. Aibak besieged the place and Hari Raja, owing to fear of eventual starvation, burnt himself on a funeral pyre. Aibak re-entered Ajmer, removed Prithviraj's son and appointed a Turkish governor in his place. Prithviraj's son was given Ranthambhor.

Capture of the Gwalior fortress

In 1195-96 A.D. Muhammad undertook another expedition and directed his energy against Bayana which was then the capital of the Jadon Bhatti Rajputs. The ruler, Kumarapala, entrenched himself in the fort of Thangir, but was obliged to surrender. The forts of Thangir and Vijayamandirgarh were then occupied by the invader, garrisoned with Turkish troops and placed in the command of Baha-ud-din Tughril. Tughril established a military station at Sultankote in order to use it as the base of operations in the plains. Having accomplished this work, Muhammad besieged Gwalior which, however, was so formidable a fortress that it could not have been taken without a prolonged siege. Not prepared to compromise his reputation, Muhammad withdrew from Gwalior on the promise of its ruler, Sulakshanapala, to acknowledge his suzerainty. But Muhammad violated this agreement and within a short time sent Tughril of Bayana to capture the impregnable fortress. This Turkish adventurer cut off Gwalior's communications all round and completely isolated it from the plains so that hardly any provisions could reach the garrison. The Rajputs fought for a year and a half, but eventually agreed to evacuate the fort which was occupied by Tughril.

Fourth rising of Rajasthan

The Rajputs had not reconciled themselves to the foreign rule. In 1196 A.D. they made the fourth attempt to throw off the Turkish yoke. The initiative was taken by the Mers who, together with the Chauhans, invited the Chalukya ruler of Anhilwara to make a concerted effort to expel the Turks. They besieged the Turkish garrison at Ajmer which issued frantic appeals to Aibak for help. Aibak rushed to the place, but was defeated by the Rajputs and compelled to take shelter inside the walls of Ajmer where he was besieged by the allies. Luckily for him, however, a contingent of troops arrived from Ghazni which obliged the Rajputs to raise the siege. Now it was Aibak's turn to retaliate. He planned an invasion of Anhilwara, the capital city of the Chalukya Rajputs of Gujarat. The Chalukyas prepared to receive Aibak at the foot of the Abu mountain. They were cleverly drawn by Aibak from the strategic place at which they had entrenched themselves to the plain below where a battle was fought. Aibak won the day, due primarily to the superior mobility of his troops and the shock-tactics that he employed in the course of the conflict. He followed up his success by plundering Anhilwara which was evacuated by the Chalukya king, Bhim II. Farishta says that he appointed a Turkish officer as governor of Anhilwara which must be incorrect; but even if he appointed any, the man was obliged to flee, for we find the entire Chalukya kingdom, including Abu, in the hands of its legitimate ruler till as late as the year 1240.

Conquest of Bundelkhand

The next three or four years were utilised by Aibak in planning and undertaking a number of petty expeditions. In 1197-98 A.D. Aibak captured Badaun from a Rashtrakuta Rajput. Then he re-occupied Banaras which had been lost after its first conquest. In 1197 A.D. he re-occupied Chandawar and Kanauj. Next year, Aibak is said to have over-run a part of Malwa. His work, however, in that part of Rajputana and Malwa proved to be of no lasting value. By this time most of central Hindustan had passed into the hands of the Turks. There, however, remained one important imperial Rajput ruling family still at large and independent. This was the Chandela family of Bundelkhand. Its northern boundary had touched the Turkish dominion and Turkish adventurers were

carrying out frontier raids ever since the occupation of Banaras and other parts of the Gahadwara territory. In 1202-3 A.D. Qutub-ud-din Aibak invaded Kalinjar which was the military capital of the Chandela king, Paramardi Deva. The Chandelas fought with great courage and gallantry; but, owing to the numerical superiority of the enemy, were obliged to take refuge in the fort. The siege lasted for a long time and so wearied Paramardi Deva that he was found willing to accept the Turkish suzerainty, but he died before the agreement could be signed. Ajaya Deva, his chief minister, withdrew the offer and continued resistance. He had enough of provisions inside the fort and was assured of abundant water from a hillside spring. The Turks, realising the strength of the Chandelas, probably from local spies, cunningly diverted the course of the spring. Ajaya Deva suddenly found the garrison in the fort short of water. So he begged for terms and was allowed to evacuate Kalinjar. Thus Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho were occupied and constituted into a military division.

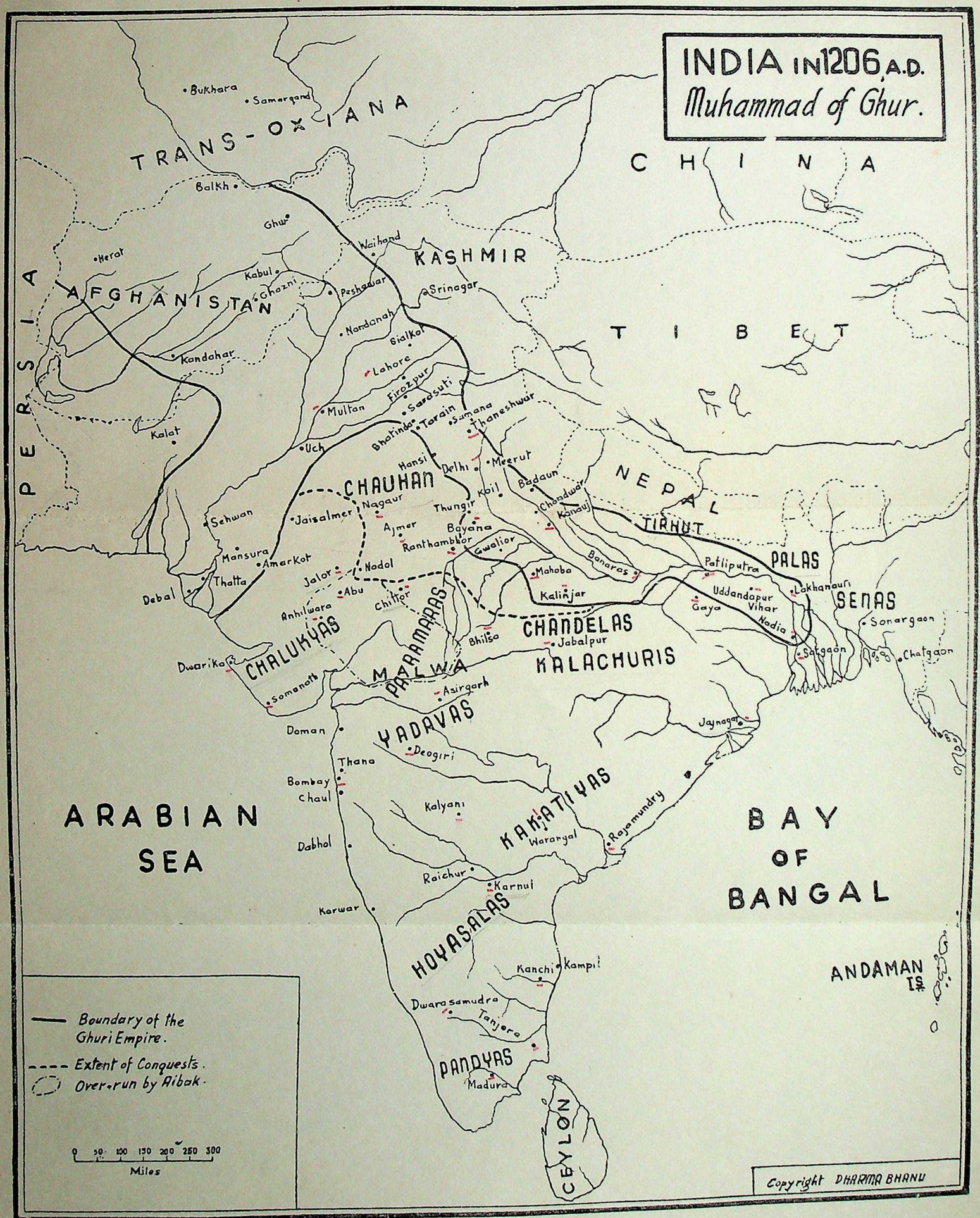
Conquest of Bihar

At this very time when stray places in central Hindustan were gradually being subdued by Qutub-ud-din Aibak, one of his ordinary commanders named Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji, was planning the conquest of the eastern provinces of our country. This commander was of ungainly build and ugly looks and had not been able to secure an employment commensurate with his ability and ambition. In fact, he was refused service at Ghazni and Delhi owing to his forbidding looks. So he enrolled himself in the service of Malik Hisam-ud-din Aghul-Bak who was in charge of Awadh. Here he showed ability, daring and resourcefulness and was, consequently, rewarded with an assignment of the villages of Bhagwat and Bhiuli. This furnished him with the means of enlisting a force of adventures who were mostly Khaljis like himself from the eastern border of Afghanistan. At the head of these reckless bands he would carry on frequent raids in the province of Bihar, east of the river Karmanasa. The region had been weakened and its administration completely disorganised after the fall of the Gahadwaras of Kanauj and Banaras. It, therefore, offered an alluring temptation to Ikhtiyar-ud-din who earned fame and wealth by his repeated incursions into the country. In one of these expeditions, he pushed on as far as Uddandapur Vihara which he

plundered and destroyed. This place was a university town and was guarded by but a few armed men who were hustled out of his way. The inhabitants, most of whom were Buddhist monks, were now put to the sword and the town occupied, and a great library taken possession of. Historians differ regarding the fate of this library. There is no definite record to show that it was burnt. But books were of no value to the Turkish adventurers who had no respect for an alien literature. It is probable that they were destroyed. Ikhtiyar-ud-din followed up his success by capturing Vikramasila and Nalanda, two other university towns, and by building a fortress at Uddandapur. This took place in 1202-3 A.D.

Conquest of Bangal

Ikhtiyar-ud-din was so emboldened by this success that he planned the conquest of Bangal which was ruled by Lakshmana Sena of the Sena dynasty. The ruler of Bangal was not only an old man, but also absolutely lethargic and negligent of his duties. Inspite of the repeated raids of Turkish adventurers on his western frontier, he had failed to take even ordinary precaution to safeguard his territory. He had done absolutely nothing to defend his vulnerable frontier in the west against the aggressive Turks. Ikhtiyar-ud-din was fully aware of the imbecility of king Lakshmana Sena and his utter neglect of military administration. He, therefore, decided to try his luck in that region. Sometime in 1204-5 A.D., he started at the head of his army and, passing swiftly through the jungles of Jharkhand in South Bihar, he appeared suddenly at Nadia which was one of the two capitals of Bangal and the place of residence of its king. Ikhtiyar-ud-din's march was so rapid that his army was left behind and, it is said, only eighteen troopers could keep pace with him (to Nadia). The adventurers cut down the guards at the gate of the palace and made a forcible entry inside the gate. Lakshmana Sena had just sat down to his mid-day meal. The uproar at the gate confused him beyond measure and he fled by the back door of the palace. His flight decided the issue. The Raja's troops could not assemble in time and make an attempt to defend the palace. Meanwhile, Ikhtiyar-ud-din's army had arrived and taken possession of the town without any opposition. As usual, the Turks indulged in indiscriminate slaughter and plundering and acquired immense riches. Then he moved towards north and


INDIA IN 1206 A.D.
Muhammad of Ghur.
TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
Balkh
Ghur
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Peshawar
Waihand
KASHMIR
Srinagar
CHINA
TIBET
PERSIA
AFGHANISTAN
Kandahar
Nandanah
Sialkot
Lahore
Firozpur
Sarsuti
Multan
Kalat
Uch
Bhatinda
Tarain
Samana
Thaneshwar
Hansi
Delhi
Meerut
CHAUHAN
Nagaur
Jaisalmer
Sehwan
Ajmer
Thungir
Koil
Badaun
Chandwar
Kanauj
NEPAL
TIRHUT
Bayana
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Mansura
Amarkot
Jalor
Nadol
Thatta
Debal
Mahoba
Banaras
Patliputra
PALAS
Kalinjar
Uddandapur Vihar
Gaya
Lakhanauti
SENAS
Nadia
Sonargaon
Satgaon
Chatgaon
Anhilwara
Abu
Chittor
CHALUKYAS
PARAMARAS
CHANDELAS
Jabalpur
Bhilsa
KALACHURIS
Dwarika
Somanath
MALWA
Asirgarh
Jaynagar
Doman
YADAVAS
Deogiri
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Kalyani
KAKATIYAS
Warangal
Rajamundry
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
Dabhol
Raichur
Karnul
Karwar
HOYASALAS
Kanchi
Kampil
ANDAMAN Is.
Dwarasamudra
Tanjore
PANDYAS
Madura
CEYLON
Boundary of the Ghuri Empire.
Extent of Conquests.
Over-run by Aibak.
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
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established himself at Lakhanauti near Gaur. Lakshmana Sena took shelter in eastern Bangal where he continued to rule for some time.

Ikhtiyar-ud-din made no attempt to conquer and occupy the whole of Bangal. He decided to conquer Tibet and China instead, which, however, was not within the bounds of possibility. He suffered greatly in this enterprise in March, 1206. His army was also completely destroyed. He was brought back to Devakot almost a half-dead man and was treacherously slain by one of his own lieutenants, named Ali Mardan Khalji.

Muhammad of Ghur's death : his achievements

Muhammad of Ghur was called back to his country (Ghazni) in order to meet his Central Asian enemies, leaving Qutub-ud-din Aibak in charge of his conquest in India. He gained some success against the encroachment of the Khwarizm Shah who was his chief rival in Central Asia. But it was short-lived. The Khwarizmi army, supported by Qara-Khitais, inflicted a crushing defeat on Muhammad at Andhkhud in 1204. It was with great difficulty that he could save himself and retreat to his capital of Ghur. He was obliged to conclude a defensive alliance with Ala-ud-din Khwarizm Shah whereby he resigned his claim to all his conquests in Central Asia, except Herat and Balkh. The news of Muhammad's defeat at Andhkhud spread like wild fire and it was rumoured that he himself had been killed in the battle. This led to a general rising among the turbulent people of the Panjab. The situation was worsened by the defection and disloyalty of one of the officers of Muhammad, named Aibak-bak, who killed the governor of Multan and established himself as an independent ruler of the place. The Khokhars and other turbulent tribes, who resided in the country between Lahore and Ghazni, broke into an open rebellion and began plundering the districts between the Chenab and the Jhelam. They made an attempt to capture Lahore. The roads became infested with rebels and the revenues from the Panjab could not be sent to Ghazni. Muhammad of Ghur was obliged to proceed to the Panjab in order to chastise the rebels. He sent urgent instructions to Qutub-ud-din Aibak to join him at the Jhelam. Aibak was besieged by the rebels on the way, but he succeeded in defeating and dispersing them and joining his master. Muhammad, accompanied by Aibak, came to Lahore and after setting its affairs began his return march to Ghazni. While he was encamped at a place called Damayak and

engaged in evening prayers, he was assassinated on 15th March, 1206, by some Shia rebels and Hindu Khokhars.

Muhammad of Ghur was, without doubt, inferior in military ability to Mahmud of Ghazni. Unlike the latter, he suffered a number of defeats at the hands of Indian rulers. He could not equal Mahmud in grandeur and influence. But in practical statesmanship, constructive ability and actual achievements he was far superior to that notable ruler of Ghazni. Like Mahmud, he quickly perceived that the political condition of India was rotten; but while Mahmud helped himself to its riches, Muhammad devoted himself to conquering quite a considerable extent of the country and establishing an empire. Wealth for its own sake had no attraction for him. He wanted territory which he desired to bequeath to his successors. In short, Muhammad's aim was loftier than that of Mahmud.

The causes of his success were his ability to gauge the situation and master it, and his steadfast determination to pursue his objective relentlessly. Moreover, he possessed patience and the quality of not accepting a defeat as final. He realised that he had little chances in Central Asia against his great rival, the Khwarizm Shah; so, like Babar after him, he concentrated all his ability and strength on acquiring a foothold in India. He was a judge of human character and patronised his slaves who fully justified his choice and confidence. Though he had no son of his body to inherit his vast dominion in India, his slaves, like Qutub-ud-din Aibak and others, were there to carry on his work. Muhammad was not a mere soldier. He was not indifferent to culture and had scholars and poets like Fakhr-ud-din Razi and Nizami Uruzi at his court. He was the real founder of the Turkish empire in India.

Causes of our defeat

A curious student might well enquire about the causes of our defeat at the hands of Mahmud of Ghazni early in the eleventh century and at those of Muhammad of Ghur at the end of twelfth century. British writers of Indian history, such as Elphinstone, Lane-Poole and Vincent A. Smith have ascribed Indian defeat to our inferiority as soldiers and to the superiority of the Turks who came from the cold climate of the north, were eaters of meat and used to warfare. This view seems to be superficial and inspired by political considerations. The Indian soldier has been superb all through our history. Even during the period of our slavery and decadence our

troops showed their mettle in the fields of battle in various parts of the world. It is a matter of common knowledge that during the World Wars I and II the Indian soldier covered himself with glory in Europe, Africa and Asia. It is too much to believe that his ancestor, who was more free and who fought for a national case, was in any way inferior. The theory that makes the people of a cold climate fighters or that which seeks to show that non-vegetarians are necessarily better fighters need not be examined here at length. Suffice it here to say that it does not stand the test of scientific examination. Moreover, our soldiers in the age of Mahmud of Ghazni and of Muhammad of Ghur were not absolute vegetarians, as they are not even today. The causes of our defeat must, therefore, be sought somewhere else. It will be well to divide them into two categories, namely, (1) general causes and (2) particular causes. As regards the general causes, our political disunity must be held primarily responsible. Each prince had to fight single-handed and he fought for his own kingdom and territory, as it were, and not for his country and people. Even in the moments of our greatest crisis our rulers did not combine to put up a united defence against the invader. Lack of political unity and proper organisation and capable leadership must, therefore, remain the most important general cause of our helplessness and defeat. In the second place, our army organisation was based on out-worn conception. They were ill-organised and ill-equipped. Our military leaders did not keep themselves in touch with the development of tactics. This has been the bane of Indian history through the ages. While foreign countries were forging ahead in the field of military development, our people remained stationary. We were, therefore, out-classed in weapons and outmanoeuvred in tactics. The great Mughul emperor, Babar, noted in his diary in 1526 that Indians knew how to die and not how to fight. That is, they were brave and did not shudder from the thought of sacrificing their lives in the field, but they lacked the capacity of taking advantage of the enemy's weakness and making use of feints and manoeuvres in the battle-field. The Rajputs prided themselves on their swordsmanship and looked upon a battle as a tournament in which to display their skill, bravery and chivalry. The Turks, on the other hand, fought to win and believed that everything was fair in war. Thirdly, the masses of our people did not really co-operate with our leaders and soldiers.

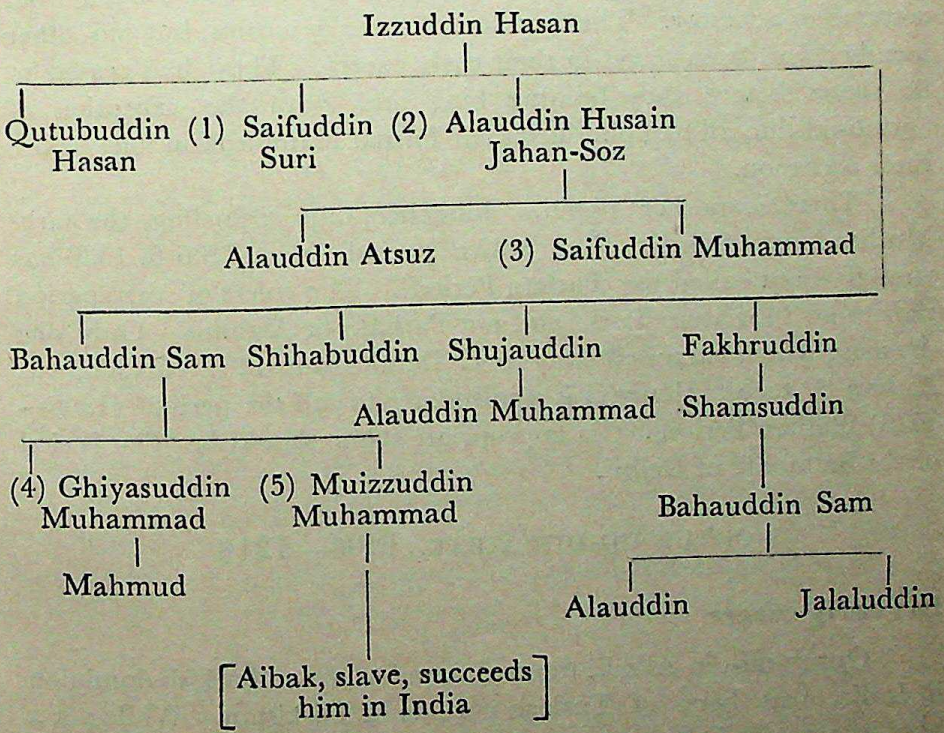
Not that they were altogether indifferent to them. On the other hand, they laboured under a mistaken notion that it was none of their business to fight. They seemed to believe that their lot would remain the same, it did not matter who occupied the throne of Delhi. Had the people become the second line of defence behind our troops, the Rajput rulers would not have staked everything on the issue of a single contest and must have made repeated attempts at resistance. Fourthly, both Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghur, the former on a much larger scale than the latter, made use of shock-tactics to dishearten and demoralise our countrymen. With lightning rapidity they swooped down upon our troops and fair cities and devastated the land with fire and sword. These tactics were repeated times out of number and so much terrified our people that they began thinking that Mahmud of Ghazni's troops were invincible. Political and military demoralisation, therefore, set in among the Indians of that age and made them think that resistance against the Turkish hordes was useless. It was this feeling that paralysed our society in that age. Fifthly, the Turks were inspired by a great religious and military enthusiasm, while our people had no such ideology to sustain them in their hour of trial. Mere physical strength and military weapons do not constitute the total equipment of an army. An inspiring ideology is as essential as military training and equipment.

As regards the particular causes, it is not possible to notice them here in detail. The Turkish invader almost invariably acquired a correct knowledge of the strength of his adversary and made full endeavours to exploit his weakness. Our rulers did not care to find loop-holes in the organisation of their common enemy. The Sultans almost every time had the survey of a prospective battle-field made and took the geography into consideration before engaging in a conflict. Our rulers divided their armies into three traditional divisions—right, centre and left—and they almost invariably made a frontal attack on the enemy, whereas the Turkish invaders had five divisions, the two additional ones being the Advance Guard and the Reserve. The Reserve was kept in readiness to launch an attack when the Sultan found our army in its last gasps. One often comes across the Turkish invaders defiling a tank or a river from which our troops drew their water supply or diverting the course of a channel so as to deprive them of water. They

ravaged the territory in the vicinity so as to cut off supplies of grain and to starve their opponents. No contemporary Muslim writer, however, makes any mention of any of the Indian rulers of his time having recourse to such tactics or stratagems against the invader. Above all, our rulers committed many a silly mistake. We have already mentioned a few such mistakes committed by king Dahir of Sindh. Similar mistakes were committed by Jayapala of the Panjab and by other rulers of northern India. Jayapala burnt himself on a funeral pyre in order not to survive his disgrace, instead of preparing himself afresh for a further contest. Very often, elephants in a battle, in which arrows were used, proved a liability rather than an asset. They were frightened and fled from the field. Our people fought mainly with sword, while the favourite Turkish weapon was archery. The mobile Turkish cavalry was more than a match for the slow Indian mares and mountain-like elephants.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Shansbani Dynasty



5

QUTUB-UD-DIN AIBAK AND HIS SUCCESSORS

The Slave Dynasty : a misnomer

Muhammad of Ghur had no son. At Ghazni he was succeeded by Ala-ud-din, who was soon displaced by Mahmud bin Ghiyas-ud-din. In his Indian dominions he was succeeded by his most prominent slave, named Qutub-ud-din Aibak, who laid the foundation of a new dynasty which is popularly known as the Slave Dynasty. Besides being a contradiction in terms, the title is historically inaccurate.. Three dynasties ruled over Delhi during the period beginning from 1206 and ending with 1290, and not one, as is commonly supposed. The founders of these dynasties, namely, Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish and Balban, had not descended from a common ancestor. The founders of these dynasties, but no other member, had been slaves in their early career. They had ceased to be slaves before they became king and, with the exception of Qutub-ud-din, all had obtained their formal manumission long before their accession.

There is another popular misconception regarding the early Muslim kings of India The entire period from 1206 to 1526 has wrongly been called the 'Pathan Period'. The rulers of this period right upto 1451 were Turks and not Pathans or Afghans. Only one dynasty, which exercised sway over Delhi from 1451 to 1526, was Pathan by race. Hence it is a misnomer to call the period (1206—1526) 'Pathan Period'. Its appropriate name should be 'The Period of the Sultanate of Delhi'.

QUTUB-UD-DIN AIBAK, 1206—1210

His early career

Qutub-ud-din Aibak, the real founder of the Turkish dominion in India, was born of Turkish parents in Turkistan. While yet a boy, he was carried a slave to Nishapur where he was purchased by the local *qazi*. When his first master died he was sold by his sons

once again and became eventually a slave of Muhammad of Ghur. While at Nishapur he had learnt riding and acquired training as a soldier in the company of the *qazi's* sons, besides picking up elementary reading and writing. At Ghazni he attracted his new master's notice by his courage, manly bearing and, particularly, by his generosity. He gave proof of his loyalty and devotion to duty and was promoted to be a commander of a section of his master's army. Next, he was appointed master of the stables (*Amir Akbur*). After the second battle of Tarain in 1192, Muhammad placed him in charge of his Indian conquests, with full powers to act during his absence. Aibak made Indraprastha near Delhi his headquarters.

During his master's absence Qutub-ud-din crushed a rebellion in Ajmer and Meerut in 1192. Next, he occupied Delhi which became the future capital of the Turkish dominion in the country. In 1194 he crushed a second rising in Ajmer and then co-operated with his master who returned to India to fight the Gahadwaras of Kanauj. Aibak played an important part in the battle which brought about the defeat and death of Jai Chand. In 1195 Aibak had to proceed to Koil (Aligarh) which he captured, and from there he marched to Ajmer to suppress a third rising there. In this expedition he acquired the famous fortress of Ranthambhor. In 1196 Aibak was besieged by the Mers, but he succeeded in extricating himself from the difficult situation and, rapidly proceeding to Anhilwara, plundered and ravaged it. In 1197-98, Aibak captured Badaun and then Chandawar and Kanauj. He occupied himself in operations in Rajputana and subdued the kingdom of Sirohi and probably part of Malwa also—conquests which were not destined to be permanent. In 1202-3 Aibak invaded Bundelkhand and defeated the Chandela king, Paramardi Deva, acquiring Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho. One of his lieutenants, Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji, conquered Bihar and a part of Bangal, a mention of which has already been made in the foregoing pages. Before his accession to the throne and his master's death, Qutub-ud-din Aibak was, thus, already in possession of almost the whole of northern India as his master's lieutenant and representative in this country.

Accession

Muhammad of Ghur seems to have desired that Qutub-ud-din Aibak should succeed him in Hindustan. That was why in 1206

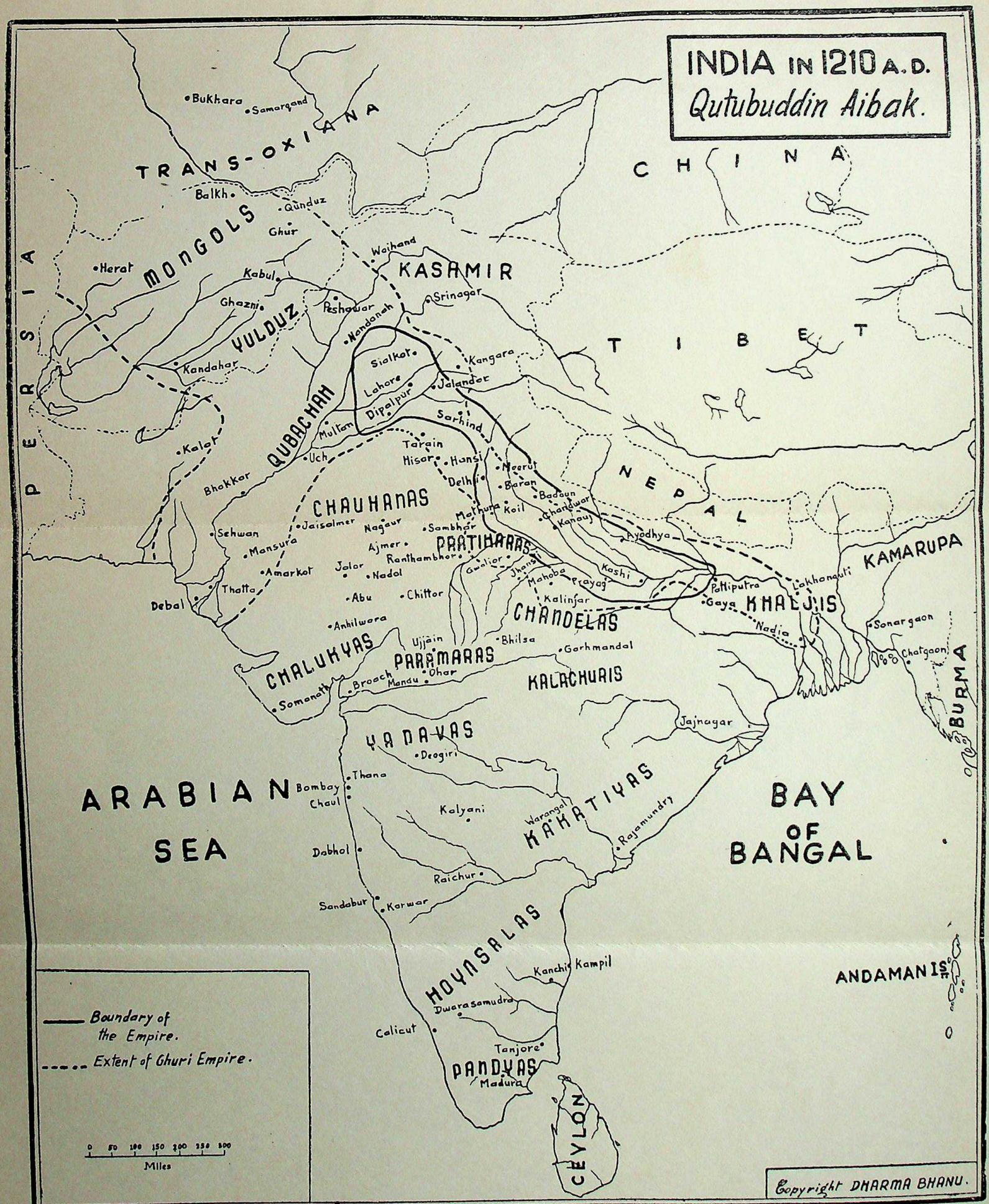
he had formally invested him with viceregal powers and conferred upon him the title of *Malik*. When Muhammad's death became known, the citizens of Lahore sent an invitation to Qutub-ud-din to assume sovereign powers. He proceeded from Delhi to Lahore and took up the reins of government in his hands, although his formal accession took place on 24th June, 1206, that is, a little over three months after Muhammad of Ghur's death. It seems that Qutub-ud-din occupied himself during the interval to build up a strong party of his own. In fact, long before his accession he had strengthened his position by a clever policy of matrimonial alliances. He had given his daughter in marriage to Iltutmish and his sister to Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, while he himself had married the daughter of Taj-ud-din Yulduz. On his accession he used the title of Malik and Sipahsalar, but not that of Sultan. He does not seem to have struck coins or read the *khutba* in his name. The reason, perhaps, was that he was still technically a slave. His formal manumission could not be obtained till 1208. But Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud of Ghur, who was his master's successor, sent him the royal insignia and standard and also conferred upon him the title of Sultan. Whatever might have been the legal flaw, Qutub-ud-din became *de facto* Sultan of the almost entire Hindustan.

Qutub-ud-din as king

Qutub-ud-din ruled for four years. During this period he made no fresh conquests. He did not find time for establishing a sound system of administration. His administration was purely military and rested on the support of the army. Besides a powerful force at the capital, he kept garrisons in important towns in all parts of Hindustan. The local administration was left in the hands of the native officers with old revenue rules and regulations intact. At the capital and in the provincial towns Muslim officers were placed in charge of administration. They were mostly soldiers. There must have been a *qazi* at the capital and probably one in each of the newly conquered provinces. Administration of justice was rough and ill-organised. In short, Qutub-ud-din was not a constructive genius. He does not seem to have laid the foundation of a solid structure of civil administration.

Foreign policy

Qutub-ud-din's entire reign was devoted to foreign affairs. First


INDIA IN 1210 A.D.
Qutubuddin Aibak.
TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samargand
Balkh
Qunduz
MONGOLS
Ghur
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
YULDUZ
Kandahar
PERSIA
Kalat
QUBACHAH
Multan
Uch
Bhakkar
Waihand
KASAMIR
Srinagar
Peshawar
Nandonah
Sialkot
Kangara
Lahore
Jalandar
Dipalpur
Sarhind
Tarain
Hisar
Hansi
Meerut
Delhi
Baran
Badaun
Chandwar
Kanauj
Koil
Mathura
CHAUHANAS
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Sambhar
Sehwan
Mansura
Ajmer
Ranthambhor
PRATIHARAS
Amarkot
Jalor
Nadol
Thatta
Debal
Abu
Chittor
Anhilwara
Gwalior
Jhansi
Mahoba
Kalinjar
Prayag
Kashi
Ayodhya
NEPAL
TIBET
CHINA
KAMARUPA
Pattiputra
Gaya
Lakhanauti
KHALJIS
Nadia
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
BURMA
CHANDELAS
CHALUKYAS
Ujjain
PARAMARAS
Bhilsa
Garhmandal
Somanath
Broach
Mandu
Dhar
KALACHURIS
Jajnagar
YADAVAS
Deogiri
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Kalyani
Warangal
KAKATIYAS
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Raichur
Sandabur
Karwar
HOYSALAS
Kanchi
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ANDAMAN Is.
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
Boundary of the Empire.
Extent of Ghuri Empire.
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
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of all, he had to reckon with his chief rivals, namely, Taj-ud-din Yulduz and Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, who were in charge of powerful states and posed as his equals. Secondly, the important Hindu chiefs, who had been subdued in the time of Muhammad of Ghur, were anxious to take advantage of his death to regain their lost independence. The Chandela capital, Kalinjar, had been recovered by the Rajputs in 1206. The Gahadwaras, under Harish Chandra, had regained most of their power in Farrukhabad and Badaun. Gwalior had again fallen into the hands of the Pratiharas. Bangal and Bihar were in the throes of a revolution owing to the death of Ikhtiyar-ud-din.

The greatest danger for the infant Turkish kingdom of Delhi, however, was from Central Asia. Alauddin Muhammad, the Khwarizm Shah had his eyes on Ghazni and Delhi. Qutub-ud-din's immediate task, therefore, was to prevent the Khwarizm Shah from occupying Ghazni and Delhi and the Rajputs from recovering their principalities, and to put down the pretensions of his rivals, Qubachah and Yulduz. He addressed himself to the task in all seriousness. To meet the danger from the north-west, Aibak moved from Delhi to Lahore and spent the whole of his remaining life in that town. Taj-ud-din Yulduz had occupied Ghazni on Muhammad of Ghur's death. He was, however, compelled to leave that city and to withdraw towards the Panjab. Aibak successfully resisted Yulduz from acquiring a footing in the Panjab. But he feared lest the vacant Ghazni should be occupied by the Khwarizm Shah Alauddin Muhammad. Deciding to forestall the Shah's designs he proceeded to that city in response to an invitation from its citizens and occupied it in 1208. But he was unpopular. Ghazni was re-occupied by Yulduz. Aibak successfully resisted the claims of Yulduz to the sovereignty of Hindustan. He did not allow to be entangled in Central Asian politics.

The death of Ikhtiyar-ud-din Khalji threatened to severe the connection of Bangal and Bihar with Delhi. Ali Mardan Khan had set himself up as an independent ruler at Lakhanauti, but the local Khalji chiefs replaced him by Muhammad Sheran and threw him into prison. Ali Mardan, however, escaped from confinement, went to Delhi and persuaded Aibak to intervene in the affairs of Bangal. Qutub-ud-din's agent, Qaimaz Rumi, succeeded, though not without difficulty, in persuading the Khaljis to recognise Aibak's

overlordship. Ultimately Ali Mardan became governor of Bangal and he agreed to send to Delhi an annual tribute.

Qutub-ud-din had been so much occupied with the politics of the north-western region and those of Bangal that he could get to pursue a policy of aggressive warfare against the Rajputs. He died, in 1210, of injuries received as the result of a fall from his horse while playing polo. He was buried at Lahore. Over his remains a very unpretentious monument was raised which is hardly worthy of the first independent Turkish Sultan of northern India.

His estimate

Qutub-ud-din Aibak was a great military leader. He was a gifted soldier who had risen from obscurity and poverty to power and fame. He possessed a high degree of courage and intrepidity. He was one of those able and powerful slaves to whom Muhammad of Ghur's success in India was largely due. As has been mentioned, he conquered for his master many important towns and principalities in Hindustan. He could, however, make no conquests during his career as a ruler. This was due to his pre-occupations. Besides being a military leader of ability, he was also interested in literature. He possessed a refined taste and patronised men of learning, such as Hasan Nizami and Fakhre Mudir, who dedicated their books to him. He was also interested in architecture. He built two mosques out of the materials of Hindu temples which he destroyed, one at Delhi, known as *Quwat-ul-Islam*, and the other at Ajmer, known as *Dhai Din ka Jhonpara*. Muslim writers praise his generosity. According to them he was known as *Lakha Buksha*, that is, giver of lakhs; but at the same time, he was also notorious for his killing which, too, was by lakhs. He does not seem to have followed the enlightened policy of religious toleration, though he is said to have twice interceded with Muhammad for the vanquished Hindu princes. He was not a constructive genius. He built no civil institutions and carried out no administrative reform. His greatest achievement was to sever India's connection with Ghazni and thus to put an end to Ghazni's sovereignty over Hindustan.

ARAM SHAH, 1210—1211

Qutub-ud-din's death, occurring as it did within a few years of the foundation of the new Turkish state in India, caused a great confusion among his followers. His officers at Lahore placed his

son, Aram Shah, on the throne. But the citizens of Delhi refused to support the new ruler who was a weak and worthless young man. The citizens of Delhi felt that at that critical period in the history of the Turkish rule the government should be in the hands of a competent soldier and a tried administrator. So, headed by the chief magistrate, they sent an invitation to Iltutmish, governor of Badaun and a son-in-law of Qutub-ud-din, to come and accept the crown. Iltutmish accepted the invitation. Aram Shah would not willingly resign the throne, and he prepared to fight Iltutmish. Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, who was governor of Uch in the time of Qutub-ud-din, prepared to take advantage of the confusion and rivalry between Iltutmish and Aram Shah. He proceeded to Multan and brought it under his control. Ali Mardan Khalji of Bangal ceased to pay homage to Delhi. During Aram's rule, thus, the newly established Turkish kingdom in India was parcelled out into four independent states. Aram was supported by the people of Lahore with whose help he proceeded against Iltutmish who had crowned himself king at Delhi. He was, however, easily defeated and perhaps put to death. Aram Shah's inglorious reign lasted for about eight months.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Qutubi Dynasty

(1) Qutub-ud-din Aibak

(2) Aram Shah — Daughter m. Iltutmish

6

ILTUTMISH AND HIS SUCCESSORS

ILTUTMISH, 1211—1236

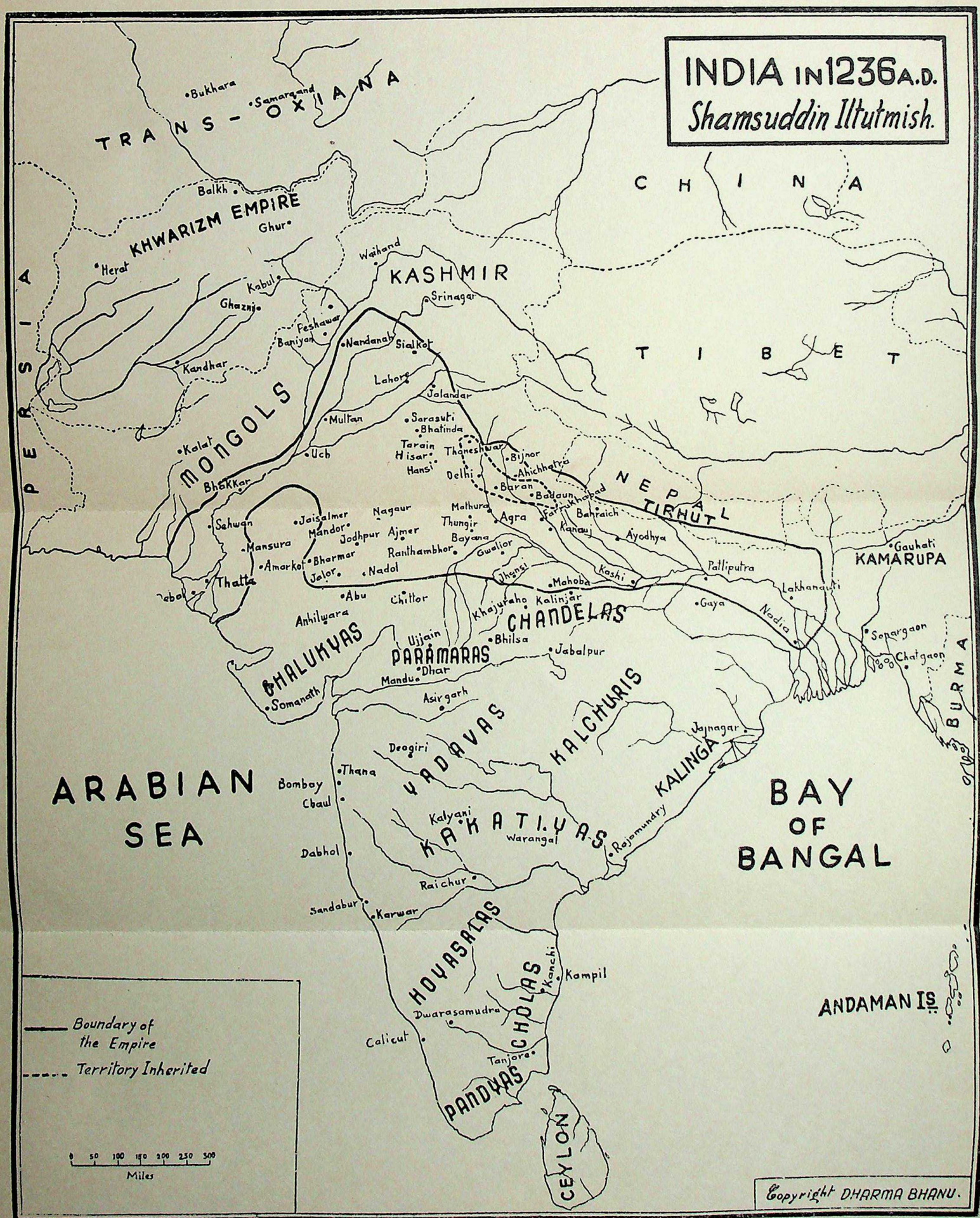
Early career

The full name of Iltutmish was Shams-ud-din Iltutmish. He was born of noble Turkish parents of the Ilbari tribe of Central Asia and was, in early boyhood, sold as a slave by his envious brothers. He was purchased by a merchant, named Jamal-ud-din, who took him to Ghazni. Then he was brought to Delhi and sold a second time, now to Qutub-ud-din. Iltutmish had signs of promise on his forehead from his very boyhood. Unlike Aibak, his master, he was handsome. He had received training as a soldier and had also learnt reading and writing. It is said that Muhammad of Ghur was much impressed and recommended him to Qutub-ud-din Aibak in these words: "Treat Iltutmish well, for he will distinguish himself." Henceforth Iltutmish's rise was rapid. He was promoted from position to position till he became the master of the royal hunt (*Amir Shikar*). After the conquest of Gwalior he was placed in charge of that fort. Next, he was promoted to the governorship of Baran (Bulandshahr). Qutub-ud-din gave his daughter in marriage to him and, subsequently, appointed him governor of Badaun. He became king in 1211.

Iltutmish not a usurper

As the throne of Delhi did not belong to him by right, Iltutmish has been called a usurper by some modern writers. But, in fact, he was not a usurper "for the simple reason that there was nothing to be usurped."[1] At that time there was no unified Turkish state in the country, as we have shown, and Hindustan, which had been recently conquered by the Turks, was divided into four independent principalities, namely, Lahore, Badaun, Lakhanauti and Multan and Uch. Iltutmish was a candidate of the nobility and officials of Delhi which had assumed the position of the premier city

[1] See Tripathi's *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, p. 25.


INDIA IN 1236 A.D.
Shamsuddin Iltutmish.
TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
CHINA
Balkh
KHWARIZM EMPIRE
Ghur
Herat
PERSIA
Kabul
Ghazni
Waihand
KASHMIR
Srinagar
Peshawar
Baniyan
Nandanah
Sialkot
Kandhar
TIBET
Lahore
Jalandar
MONGOLS
Multan
Sarasuti
Bhatinda
Kalat
Uch
Tarain
Hisar
Hansi
Thaneshwar
Bijnor
Ahichhatra
Delhi
Baran
Badaun
Farrukhabad
NEPAL
TIRHUT
Bhakkar
Mathura
Agra
Bahraich
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Thungir
Kanauj
Ayodhya
Mandor
Jodhpur
Ajmer
Bayana
Mansura
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Gauhati
KAMARUPA
Amarkot
Bharmar
Jalor
Nadol
Jhansi
Mahoba
Kashi
Patliputra
Thatta
Abu
Chittor
Khajuraho
Kalinjar
Lakhanauti
Gaya
Nadia
Anhilwara
CHANDELAS
Sonargaon
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Chatgaon
CHALUKYAS
PARAMARAS
Jabalpur
Dhar
Mandu
BURMA
Somanath
Asirgarh
KALCHURIS
YADAVAS
Jajnagar
Deogiri
Thana
KALINGA
ARABIAN SEA
Bombay
Chaul
BAY OF BANGAL
Kalyani
KAKATIYAS
Warangal
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Raichur
Sandabur
Karwar
HOYASALAS
Kanchi
Kampil
CHOLAS
ANDAMAN IS.
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
Tanjore
PANDYAS
CEYLON
Boundary of the Empire
Territory Inherited
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
Copyright DHARMA BHANU.

of Hindustan, while his rival, Aram Shah, was supported by a party at Lahore which was not so important as the party at Delhi. Iltutmish, moreover, was a great military leader and had already established his reputation as a man of affairs and as an administrator. He was not a slave at this time, for, long before he had obtained his letter of manumission from Qutub-ud-din. He was possessed of great energy and ability and was more sober, religious-minded and moderate than even Qutub-ud-din. According to Islamic law, sovereignty belonged to one who was the fittest person. Aram Shah was a mere weakling as compared with him. Hence under the circumstances he was the best choice for the throne of Delhi.

His early difficulties

When Iltutmish became king, the Sultanate of Delhi was almost non-existent. He found himself master of Delhi and Badaun and the outlying districts extending from Banaras in the east to the Sivalik hills on the west. The Panjab was hostile to him. Kubachah was master of Multan and he extended his kingdom to include Bhatinda, Kuhram and Sarasuti. Taking advantage of the quarrel between Aram Shah and Iltutmish, he even seized Lahore. Bangal and Bihar severed their connection; Ali Mardan of Lakhanauti set himself up as an independent ruler. Rajput rulers, who had been vanquished by Muhammad of Ghur and Qutub-ud-din, refused to send tribute and repudiated allegiance. Jalor became independent and so also Ranthambhor. Even Ajmer, Gwalior and the Doab threw off the Turkish yoke. Taj-ud-din Yulduz re-asserted his claims to the sovereignty of entire Hindustan. Even in Delhi the atmosphere was intriguing. Some of the royal guards at the imperial city (Delhi) entered into an alliance with Aram Shah's party and rose in rebellion. Thus at his accession Iltutmish found the throne of Delhi to be very precarious indeed.

Contest with Yulduz

Finding his position insecure Iltutmish dissembled. Realist that he was, he chose to compromise with Yulduz who advanced his claims for the sovereignty of entire Hindustan and treated Iltutmish as his vassal. Iltutmish pretended to recognise Yulduz as his overlord and accepted from him the regal insignia, that is, the canopy and the mace. By clever diplomacy and tact he put down Aram Shah's party in Delhi and brought the Turkish guard under

his control. When he found himself free from internal difficulties, he turned to settle his scores with Yulduz who had expelled Qubachah from Lahore and occupied the greatest part of the Panjab. Iltutmish's anxiety was not to give an occasion to Alauddin Muhammad, the Khwarizm Shah, to claim Hindustan as a dependency of Ghazni. That is why when Yulduz was driven out of Ghazni by the Khwarizm Shah in 1215 and took shelter in Lahore, Iltutmish marched against him and inflicted upon him a crushing defeat on the field of Tarain. Yulduz himself was taken captive and sent a prisoner to Badaun where he died soon after. This victory completed Aibak's work. The severance of Delhi's connection with Ghazni was complete. The Sultanate of Delhi became a sovereign state in fact, though not yet in theory. Iltutmish, however, allowed Lahore to remain in the hands of Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, which was annexed to Delhi two years later (1217).

The Mongol menace

The infant Turkish state of Delhi was at this time threatened by a Mongol invasion. Under their great warrior leader, Temujin,[2] popularly known as Changiz Khan, the Mongols issued from their home in the uplands of Tartary and completely destroyed the Khwarizm empire which they occupied. The Khwarizm Shah was driven to the Caspian coast, while his heir-apparent, Jalal-ud-din Mangbarni fled towards the Panjab. The Mongols, though Buddhists (Shamanists), were a terrible people. They gave a relentless pursuit to Mangbarni, who entered the Panjab and established himself in the Upper Sindh Sagar Doab. He secured the assistance of the powerful Khokhar chief by marrying his daughter in his projected expedition of the conquest of the north-western Panjab and Multan. With the help of the Khokhars, Mangbarni drove away Qubachah and occupied Sindh Sagar Doab. He even encroached upon the territory of the Ravi and the Chenab regions and captured the fort of Pasrur in the Sialkot district. Then he advanced up to Lahore and sent an envoy to Iltutmish with an appeal for shelter. Iltutmish was on the horns of a dilemma. It was discourteous to refuse asylum to a princely refugee; but, at the same time, it was unwise to invite such a powerful invader as Changiz Khan. The

[2] For the life and achievements of Changiz Khan refer to *The Mongol Empire* by Machael Prawdin, London, George Allen & Unwin, pp. 210-30.

Mongols had reached the Indus as early as 1220 in pursuit of Mangbarni. Moreover, Iltutmish's policy was not to allow the Delhi kingdom to be dragged into Central Asian politics. For these reasons, he sent a polite refusal to Mangbarni and requested him to withdraw from the Panjab. The Khwarizm prince felt insulted and prepared to avenge himself by encroaching upon Iltutmish's territory in south-eastern Panjab. Thereupon, the latter got ready for a fight in order to drive away the aggressor; but Mangbarni thought it wise not to come into conflict with Iltutmish. On the other hand, he made an attempt to capture Multan from Qubachah. Iltutmish's wise policy removed a great danger which was threatening to engulf Delhi. Changiz Khan, who was probably not desirous of violating a neutral state, returned from Afghanistan. Delhi was thus saved. Had he chosen a different course, the Sultanate of Delhi would have been finished in its infancy. But the country, in all likelihood, would have gained, for the Mongols, unlike the Turks, would gradually have merged in Hindu society as they were Shamanists and had much in common with the Indian people.

Defeat and death of Qubachah

As the Mongols had returned from Afghanistan, Mangbarni left India after three years' stay in 1224. The net result of his sojourn in the Panjab was the destruction of Qubachah's power. Sindh Sagar Doab and part of Multan passed into the hands of the Khwarizm troops. The south-eastern portions of Qubachah's dominion, which had originally been parts of Delhi, were now easily recovered by Iltutmish who thus captured Bhatinda, Kuhram and Sarasuti and the country along the Hakara river. After Mangbarni's withdrawal, only Multan and Sindh were left to Qubachah. Iltutmish, anxious to take the fullest advantage of the effect produced by the movements of the Khwarizm troops on Qubachah's power, planned a double attack on the latter's territory from two different directions. First, he made arrangements to recover Lahore. Then in 1228 he sent two armies, one from Lahore to attack Multan and the other from Delhi to capture Uch. Qubachah was perplexed and he fled to the fortress of Bhakkar on the lower Indus. Uch fell into the hands of Iltutmish after three months' siege. Qubachah was thus closely invested in Bhakkar. He offered to negotiate. Iltutmish demanded his unconditional surrender for which Qubachah was not prepared. Then a vigorous assault was made on Bhakkar

which so much terrified Qubachah that he desperately threw himself into the Indus and was drowned. This took place in 1228. Multan and Uch were now occupied and annexed to Delhi. The Sumra ruler of Debal, namely, Sinan-ud-din Chanisar, offered submission to Iltutmish. The states of Multan and Sindh thus became an integral part of Delhi.

The newly conquerred territories were constituted into three provinces, that is, the provinces of Lahore, Multan and Sindh. The province of Lahore did not include the whole of the Panjab. The limit of Iltutmish's territory was Sialkot in the north. The Sindh Sagar Doab was in the hands of the Khokhar tribe and the region known as Baniyan, which lay to the west, was in the hands of Saif-ud-din Hasan Qarlugh, a lieutenant of Jalal-ud-din Mangbarni. The governors of these three provinces were required to extend the boundary of the Delhi kingdom so as to include the whole of the Panjab. A number of expeditions were planned by them. One of these resulted in the occupation of the fortress of Nandanah in the Salt Range. In spite of his military activity and vigilance, Iltutmish's hold on the Western Panjab was not effective.

The recovery of Bangal

The supremacy of Delhi over Bangal had been re-asserted by Qutub-ud-din Aibak. But after his death, Ali Mardan, the Khalji ruler, had declared his independence. He was a tyrant. The Khaljis, therefore, rose in revolt and put him to death. The throne of Bangal now passed to Husam-ud-din Ewaz. He assumed the title of Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din. He was an able and popular ruler. He annexed Bihar and exacted tribute from the neighbouring Hindu states of Jajnagar, Tirhut, Vanga and Kamarupa. Iltutmish would not tolerate the existence of an independent ruler in a province which had originally been a part of the Delhi kingdom. As soon as he was free from the Mongol threat, he sent an army to recover Bihar. In 1225 the Sultan himself took the field. Ewaz accepted Iltutmish's sovereignty and agreed to pay an indemnity and an annual tribute without fighting. Iltutmish appointed Malik Jani governor of Bihar, but as soon as Iltutmish's back was turned, Ewaz re-asserted his independence. Iltutmish was obliged to send his son, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, governor of Awadh, to punish Ewaz. Nasir-ud-din captured Lakhanauti in 1226, and then defeated and killed Ewaz. Bangal thus once again became a province of Delhi.

Nasir-ud-din Mahmud died soon after and there was again a revolution at Lakhanauti which brought Balka Khalji to the throne of that province. Iltutmish was, therefore, obliged to plan a second expedition to Lakhanauti in 1230. Balka was defeated and killed and Bangal re-annexed. Iltutmish separated the provinces and appointed two governors, one for Bangal and the other for Bihar.

Rajasthan throws off the Turkish yoke

During the period that followed Aibak's death our people made a vigorous attempt to throw off the foreign yoke. Everywhere the Rajputs mustered courage and did their best to drive away the Turkish governors. The Chandelas recovered Kalinjar and Ajaigarh. The Pariharas drove away the Muslim garrison from Gwalior, re-occupied the place and extended their rule to include Narwar and Jhansi. The Chauhan ruler of Ranthambhor expelled the Turkish troops and imposed his sovereignty over Jodhpur and the adjacent areas. The Chauhans of Jalor reconquered Nadol, Mandor, Bharmer, Ratnapur, Sanchor, Radhadhara, Khera, Ramasin and Bhinamal and defeated the Turks. In northern Alwar, Jadon Bhattis established their supremacy. Ajmer, Bayana and Thangir also put an end to the Turkish supremacy and re-asserted their independence.

Iltutmish's operations in Rajputana

The lost of a considerable portion of the Delhi kingdom must have unnerved the Sultan's administration; but Iltutmish was not the man to fear or falter. He was determined to recover the lost provinces. As soon as he was free from the threat of Mongol invasion, he put his armies in motion and commenced the work of reconquest. In 1226 he proceeded into the heart of Rajasthan and besieged Ranthambhor. It was recaptured and re-garrisoned. Then he advanced to Mandor, the capital of the Paramaras, which, too, was recovered and garrisoned. In 1228 or 1229 he besieged Jalor. The Chauhan chief, Udai Singh, offered a stout resistance. He was, however, obliged to surrender; but was allowed to continue as the ruler of Jalor on agreeing to pay a tribute. Next, Bayana and Thangir were recovered. Then came the turn of Ajmer which, along with Sambhar and other adjacent districts, was re-occupied, but not without resistance. Nagaur in Jodhpur, which had been in Turkish hands from the time of Ghaznavide Sultan Bahram but was

lost on Qutub-ud-din's death, was next recovered. In 1231 Gwalior was besieged. Malayavarma Deva, the Parihara ruler, fought stoutly for one full year, but eventually gave in.

Malik Tayasai, governor of Bayana and Gwalior, was deputed to conquer Kalinjar. The Chandela ruler, Trilokyavarma, could not withstand the Turkish forces and left Kalinjar which was plundered; but the invader could make no progress and was so overwhelmed by the Chandelas of the vicinity that he had to flee. Besides the above conquests, Iltutmish personally led an attack on Nagada, the capital of the Guhilots. The ruler of the place, Kshetra Singh, defeated the Sultan and drove him away with heavy losses. Iltutmish made another unsuccessful attempt on the Chalukyas of Gujarat where, too, his forces suffered a reverse and were compelled to retire. In 1234-35 Iltutmish led an expedition to Malwa, plundered Bhilsa and Ujjain and destroyed the ancient temple of Mahakal. The Paramaras, who ruled over those regions, did not suffer any territorial loss. Some modern historians, notably Sir Woolseley Haig, credit Iltutmish with the conquest and annexation of Malwa, which is far from true. His expedition to that province was a mere raid and not a war of conquest.

Reconquest of the Doab

The people of the region between the Ganga and the Yamuna, known as the Doab, did not lag behind those of Rajasthan in taking advantage of the difficulties of the Turkish ruler of Delhi. While Iltutmish was overwhelmed by the rebellion of the Turkish guards, many of the districts of the modern Uttar Pradesh re-asserted their independence. The districts of Badaun, Kanauj and Banaras passed out of the hands of the Turks. The province of Katehar (modern Rohilkhand) severed its connection with Delhi. From all these parts Turkish soldiers were driven out. As soon as Iltutmish had established his authority at Delhi, he undertook operations against the Hindus of these parts. One by one, Badaun, Kanauj and Banaras were reconquerred. The province of Katehar, with its capital Ahichhatra (modern Aonla), was captured. Then an army was sent to Baharaich, north of the river Ghaghra which, too, was reduced to submission. Awadh, too, had thrown off the Turkish suzerainty, and it was very necessary to recover it. After a very tough struggle it was brought back under the supremacy of Delhi. But the new governor, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the eldest son of

Iltutmish had to wage a ceaseless war against the local tribes who put up a stout resistance in defence of their liberty and religion. The leader of these people was a chief, named Bartu (or Pirthu), who was an extremely brave and daring warrior and had repeatedly defeated the Turks and slain about 1,20,000 of the enemy troops. The province could be finally reduced only after Pirthu's death. Expeditions were also undertaken to Chandawar and Tirhut; but the latter does not seem to have been annexed.

His death

Iltutmish was taken ill while undertaking an expedition against Baniyan. He abandoned the project and returned to Delhi, a sick man. The physicians failed to cure him and he died in his place in April 1236.

His character and achievements

Iltutmish was a brave but cautious soldier. He was also a successful general. Among his notable qualities courage, sagacity, moderation and foresight must be given a prominent place. He was also an able and successful administrator. For one who had been the slave of a slave in his early life, it was no mean achievement to have risen to the throne of Delhi and occupied it for a quarter of a century. Unlike his master and predecessor, Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish did not enjoy the moral and material support of a great empire. All his achievements were his own. He began almost from the scratch. He took up Qutub-ud-din's unfinished work and built up a powerful Turkish kingdom in northern India. He recovered the territories conquered by Muhammad of Ghur in Hindustan and added to them a considerable territory in Rajputana and the northern parts of the modern Uttar Pradesh. Qutub-ud-din had lost Multan and Sindh; they were recovered and annexed to the Delhi kingdom. He added a great moral prestige to the territorial conquests of the Turkish Sultanate. He saved it from the threat of a terrible Mongol invasion before which the older and more mighty kingdoms of Central Asia had fallen with a terrible crash. Besides, he reduced his Turkish rivals to submission and imposed the Sultan's will upon them. He laid the foundation of a military monarchy which reached a high watermark of despotism under the Khaljis.

Iltutmish was the first Turkish ruler to introduce a purely Arabic coinage. His silver *tanka* weighed 175 grains and bore an

Arabic inscription on it. He appreciated merit in learned men and was fond of architecture. He built the famous Qutub Minar at Delhi.

Iltutmish was a pious Musalman. He was regular in the observance of the five daily prayers and all other rites of his religion. He was intolerant of Muslim heretics, such as, the Shias. The Ismaili Shias of Delhi rebelled against the policy of persecution and plotted against his life, but the rebellion was suppressed and they were put to death in large numbers. His treatment towards the Hindus could not have been better.[3] The very fact that contemporary Muslim writers extol his piety and his service to religion is enough to show that he must have continued the policy of religious persecution against the vast majority of his subjects. In fact, he gave satisfaction to the Muslim *ulema* and harnessed them to the service of the Sultanate. Iltutmish was not a builder of civil institutions. He was not a constructive statesman. Like Qutub-ud-din, he allowed the old indigenous institutions to continue, substituting for them Islamic ways and practices only at the top.

The most notable achievements of Iltutmish were three—(1) saving the infant Turkish kingdom from destruction, (2) giving it for the first time a legal status, and (3) perpetuating his dynasty by ensuring the succession of his children to the throne of Delhi. In February 1229, he was invested with the robes of an Islamic king by the Khalifa, Al-Mustansir Billah, which gave religious and political sanction to his political authority. He has been called the first king of the Sultanate of Delhi owing to the above-mentioned solid achievements. In fact, he occupies the first place among the rulers of the three dynasties that occupied the throne of Delhi from 1206 to 1290.

RUKN-UD-DIN FIROZ SHAH, 1236

Iltutmish's eldest son, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, who was also the ablest among his children, died in 1229, leaving his father prostrate. The Sultan did not think his next son, Firoz, competent to succeed him, as he was lazy and irresponsible and thoroughly devoted to sensual pleasures. His other sons were very young. So he decided to nominate his eldest daughter, Raziah, who was an intelli-

[3] He destroyed the chief temple at Bhilsa and the great temple of Mahakal at Ujjain, which had taken 300 years in building and was a marvellous work of art. He carried the statues of Vikramaditya and of other notable rulers made of molten brass to Delhi. See *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* (translated by Raverty), pp. 622-23.

gent, courageous and able woman, as heir-apparent. But this was a novel experiment and was not supposed to be in consonance with the spirit of the Muslim Law. Moreover, his sons and their followers were likely to oppose it. But Iltutmish overbore all opposition and managed to ensure the approval of his nobles and courtiers. The occasion was celebrated by including Raziah's name on the silver coin, *tanka*. But, when Iltutmish died, his decision was reversed and the throne passed to his eldest surviving son, named Rukn-ud-din Firoz. This young man was very openhearted and his mother, Shah Turkan, was a clever intriguer and had a large following of courtiers and officers. She displayed great activity on Iltutmish's death and had her son crowned with the support of her party. Perhaps, like his father, he would have ruled a long time, had he shown moderation and administrative qualities. But, immediately after his accession, he began a life of gaiety and pleasure and allowed his mother to usurp power. Shah Turkan, originally a handmaid in the *harem*, was inordinately ambitious. She controlled the state policy and persecuted her co-wives and their children. Firoz squandered money on his personal hobbies and scattered gold among the populace of Delhi. The result was a reaction. Internal and external troubles followed immediately. Sindh and Uch were invaded by Saif-ud-din Hasan Qarlugh, the ruler of Ghazni, Kirman and Baniyan. A party of officers rose against the new king. The king's own brother, Ghiyas-ud-din, governor of Awadh, openly rebelled and seized a convoy of treasures from Bangal and plundered several towns in Hindustan. The governors of Multan, Lahore, Hansi and Badaun entered into a pact to depose Firoz and proceeded towards Delhi. Firoz was obliged to march out of the capital to meet the rebels. During his absence Raziah exploited the public discontent against him and his mother. She appeared before the public in red robes at the time of Friday prayers and appealed to the people for help against the much-hated Shah Turkan. The people were reminded of Iltutmish's nomination of her as heir-apparent. The army officers gave their support to the people of Delhi and, before Firoz could return, Raziah was placed upon the throne and Shah Turkan was thrown into a dungeon. Firoz was arrested and put to death in November 1236. His reign had lasted only for seven months.

RAZIAH, 1236—1240

Raziah became ruler in name only. She had the support of the people and nobility of Delhi; but the governors of the provinces of Badaun, Multan, Hansi and Lahore, who had no hand in her election, were definitely hostile. They were joined by Firoz's wazir, Nizam-ul-mulk Muhammad Junaidi. The confederates besieged Raziah in her capital. Though powerless against this combination, she adroitly played her game of diplomacy. She sowed dissension among the confederates. The rebel governors fell out among themselves and the confederacy was broken. Raziah now fell on them. Two of the confederates were taken prisoners and slain. The wazir fled to save himself, but died a fugitive in Sirmur hills.

Raziah's triumph brought her great prestige and stabilised her position. She redistributed the high offices of the state and appointed Khwaja Muhazab-ud-din her wazir. She made fresh appointments to the posts of governors of the provinces. The entire Hindustan from Lakhanauti to Debal submitted to her. Bangal also came back under Delhi. But Raziah's very success proved to be the chief cause of her downfall. She had taken steps to make the power of the crown absolute. The Turkish nobles, who had formed themselves into a military brotherhood and monopolised all power in the State since the time of Qutub-ud-din Aibak, would not tolerate a very powerful and despotic monarch who was pursuing the policy of making her will supreme. They considered themselves to be indispensable and would not allow the sovereign to occupy a higher place than that of the chief among the peers. Moreover, Raziah seems to have given offence to the orthodox Muslim opinion by casting off female attire and the seclusion of the harem. She dressed herself as a man, rode in public and transacted business in the open court. She took steps to emphasise the firmness and vigour of her rule. She commanded armies and took part in battles. Such conduct in a woman, though a queen, appeared scandalous to the hoary Turkish warriors. She is also said to have shown an undue preference for an Abyssinian officer, Jamal-ud-din Yaqut, who held the office of her master of the horse. Probably, this was the result of her deliberate policy of breaking the Turkish nobles' monopoly of all important posts in the kingdom.

The fall of Raziah

The above causes led to a conspiracy against the queen. The

leaders of the conspiracy were the *amirs* and *maliks* at the court and in the provinces. They wanted to depose Raziah and to replace her by a ruler who should be weak and abide by their wishes. The leader of the conspiracy was Ikhtiyar-ud-din Aeitigin who held the high office of the queen's lord chamberlain (*amir-i-hajib*), and the other prominent members were Malik Altunia, governor of Bhatinda, and Kabir Khan, governor of Lahore. Aware of Raziah's military strength and the loyalty of troops to her, the conspirators wanted to decoy her to a distant place and to finish her off there. In pursuance of this plan, Kabir Khan, governor of Lahore, revolted early in 1240. The queen proceeded quickly to put down the rebellion. Kabir Khan was defeated and he fled. His progress was, however, barred by the presence of the Mongols at the river Chenab. So he returned and surrendered to the queen unconditionally. Raziah returned victorious to the capital. But the conspirators would not give up their design. Their next rebellion took place within a fortnight of Raziah's return. This time Altunia, the governor of Bhatinda and a friend of the lord chamberlain, raised the standard of revolt. Inspite of the heat of the season, Raziah was again on the march against the rebels. This time, however, the conspirators played their game with consummate skill. As soon as Raziah reached Bhatinda, some agents of the conspirators abused Yaqut (Raziah's master of the horse) and put him to death. The queen's party was thus weakened; and, perhaps, she was found in a state of mental confusion. The conspirators now laid their hands on her and threw her into prison (April 1240). They raised Bahram, Iltutmish's third son, to the throne. The conspirators returned to Delhi. They had won in the contest against the crown.

In the redistribution of offices that took place on the accession of Bahram, Altunia did not get what he had expected. He, therefore, became disaffected. He thought of a plan to avenge himself. In August 1240, he released Raziah from the prison fort of Bhatinda, married her and proceeded with her to Delhi to capture it by force. But they were defeated by Bahram's army and compelled to return towards Bhatinda. Their troops had deserted them and near Kaithal they were murdered by some Hindu robbers on 13th October, 1240.

An estimate of Raziah

Raziah was the only Muslim woman who sat upon the throne

of Delhi. Although her reign was brief, lasting barely for three years and a half, she was, without doubt, a very successful and extraordinary ruler. She was brave and energetic. She was a good soldier and general. She was adept in the arts of political intrigue and diplomacy. She succeeded in restoring the prestige of the Turkish kingdom in India. She raised the power of the crown and made it absolute. In fact, she was the first Turkish ruler of Delhi to have imposed the royal will upon the *amirs* and *maliks*. Qutub-ud-din was the chief noble among the nobles. Iltutmish was shy to sit upon the throne in the presence of his peers. Other members of the dynasty of Iltutmish, both before and after her, were much weaker in personality and character. Raziah was, therefore, the first and the last ruler of Iltutmish's dynasty to dominate the politics of the Sultanate of Delhi by sheer force of her ability and character. The contemporary historian, Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, describes her as "a great sovereign, and sagacious, just, beneficent, the patron of the learned, a dispenser of justice, the cherisher of her subjects and of warlike talent, and.....endowed with all admirable attributes and qualifications necessary for kings." He concludes his estimate of the queen with the lamentation : "Of what advantage were all these excellent qualifications unto her ?"

It is usually believed that the cause of Raziah's fall was her sex, as the Turkish nobles did not like to be ruled by a woman. But the primary cause of her downfall seems to have been the determined ambition of the Turkish military aristocracy to keep the ruler of Delhi a tool in their hands and to retain the monopoly of power for themselves, whereas Raziah had all through followed the opposite course of making herself supreme in the kingdom and concentrating power in her hands. Her sex was only a secondary cause of her premature end.

MUIZ-UD-DIN BAHRAM SHAH, 1240—1242

The new king was Iltutmish's third son. He had been raised to the throne on the definite understanding that he would allow the Turkish *maliks* and *amirs* to exercise full power and that the king would only reign and not govern. He was also required to allow the Turkish nobles to nominate the king's deputy, that is, *naib-i-mamlikat*, a new post created at the time. Ikhtiyar-ud-din Aeitigin was appointed to this high office. Muhazab-ud-din remained the

wazir, but his post now sank definitely to secondary position. The supremacy of the Turkish military aristocracy was now complete.

The *naib-i-mamlikat*, Aeitigin, usurped much of the power formerly wielded by the sultan. He even appropriated some of the royal prerogatives, such as playing *naubat* at his gate and keeping an elephant. He married a sister of Bahram and easily became more important and powerful than the king himself. Bahram could not put up with the encroachment on his prerogatives. He, therefore, had the naib murdered in his office. But the king's triumph was short-lived. Although no new naib was appointed, yet the lord chamberlain (*amir-i-hajib*) Badr-ud-din Sunqar, who was an influential member of the Turkish aristocracy, known as 'the Forty' appropriated all the power formerly wielded by the naib. The sultan became jealous of him. The wazir was already against Sunqar. The two made a common cause against the *amir-i-hajib* who, on his part, plotted for the deposition and death of the king. The wazir divulged the plot to the sultan who dismissed Sunqar and banished him to Badaun. As Sunqar returned to the court without permission, he was arrested and put to death. The Turkish nobles, who were alienated against the sultan as a result of Aeitigin's murder, got thoroughly alarmed. The Turkish *ulema* (ecclesiasticals), too, were hostile, as one of them was put to death by the king's orders. The wazir, Muhazab-ud-din, had his own score to settle with his sovereign. An all-pervading conspiracy was hatched. At this time the Mongols invaded the Panjab and besieged the city of Lahore in 1241. An army was sent for the relief of the city. The wazir, who had accompanied it, revealed to the officers that the sultan had sent secret orders for their arrest and execution. The army was filled with rage and, vowing vengeance on the sultan, returned from the way to depose him. The citizens of Delhi fought desperately but they were no match for regular troops. The city fell the next day. Bahram was seized and put to death in May 1242.

ALA-UD-DIN MASUD SHAH, 1242—1246

The ascendancy of the Turkish aristocracy was fully established and the crown again suffered a defeat at their hands. The victorious nobles would have raised one of their own number to the throne if jealousy had not prevented them from recognising the merit in the ablest among them. Consequently, they raised to the throne

Ala-ud-din Masud Shah, a very young son of Rukn-ud-din Firoz Shah and a grandson of Iltutmish, on the condition that he would abide by the agreement made by his predecessor. He was to delegate all power to 'the Forty' and himself to enjoy the title of Sultan. The naib's post was recreated and given to Malik Qutub-ud-din Hassan, a refugee from Ghur. Other high posts were monopolised by the members of 'the Forty'. The wazir Muhazab-ud-din dominated the court and exercised the power which was formerly held by the naib, while the naib was reduced to a secondary place. There was soon a quarrel between the wazir and the Turkish aristocracy. Muhazab-ud-din was dismissed and a new wazir in the person of Nazim-ud-din Abu Bakr was appointed. The post of *amir-i-hajib* went to Balban who was destined to reach the throne in the years to come. Balban, though a junior member of the aristocracy, dominated the party by reason of his superior ability and strength of character. Gradually, he appropriated most of the power and diverted the attention of the aristocracy from their mutual quarrels to campaigns against the Rajputs and the Mongols. This policy was so successful that the Turkish state regained some of its prestige and Masud's reign enjoyed comparative tranquillity and lasted for four years.

Yet internal jealousy and trouble did not disappear altogether. The kingdom was torn by dissension and disturbed by rebellions. Tughan Khan, governor of Bangal, repudiated the authority of Delhi. He even annexed Bihar and invaded Awadh. Multan and Uch cut themselves off. In 1245 Multan was invaded and occupied by Saif-ud-din Hassan Qarlugh. The Mongols re-appeared in the upper Panjab. They even proceeded to besiege Uch but were obliged to abandon it as an army of relief was sent from Delhi in time.

The state of affairs, though not satisfactory, was improving and Balban was gradually emerging as the man at the capital. A conspiracy was formed against the sultan by Balban himself in league with Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, another son of Iltutmish, and his mother. The result of the conspiracy was that Masud was deposed and Nasir-ud-din Mahmud was crowned king in June 1246.

NASIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD, 1246—1265

His accession and character

Nasir-ud-din Mahmud was enthroned at Delhi on 10th June, 1246. With his accession the struggle between the crown and the

peers for the possession of real power in the state (which had begun after the death of Iltutmish) came to an end. The Turkish nobility won the contest. Nasir-ud-din Mahmud loyally abided by the tacit agreement and willingly resigned all power in the hands of Balban, the leader of 'the Forty'. The new king was by nature unambitious, docile and even timid. He contented himself with the mere form of royalty and left the substance of authority to his nobles. He was a religious-minded man, but his natural religiosity was accentuated by the memory of the fate that his predecessors had suffered at the hands of the nobility, by the great internal commotion caused by the attempt of the Hindu chiefs to regain their power and by the threat of a foreign invasion by the Mongols. Several anecdotes are related about the piety and simplicity of this ruler. One such anecdote is that his only queen used to cook his meals and, one day, when her fingers were burnt in the kitchen, she complained to the sultan and requested him to provide her with a maid-servant. Nasir-ud-din is said to have refused to comply on the plea that he was only a trustee of the State and could not use public money for his own comfort. These stories are, without doubt, very highly exaggerated. It is inconceiveable that the sultan's wife, who was Balban's daughter, could have no maid-servant. We know that he had more than one wife and many slaves. The only truth in this and the various other anecdotes seems to be that Nasir-ud-din Mahmud probably lived an unostentatious life and spent most of his time in copying the Quran and in doing kindly acts of charity. He could not help it, for it was impossible for him to play the king under the circumstances. The very fact that he entered into a conspiracy with Balban against his nephew and benefactor, Masud, shows that he was not altogether without worldly ambition. But he was sagacious enough to understand his own limitations and the difference between what was possible and what was not. It was the knowledge of this together with his natural character that made him reign for about twenty years and die a natural death in 1265.

Balban : *de facto* ruler, 1246—1252

As Balban was instrumental in raising Nasir-ud-din to the throne, the sultan placed all power in the hands of this leader of 'the Forty'. Abu Bakr seems to have continued as nominal wazir and become a partisan of Balban. The most important offices went to Balban's relatives. His younger brother, Kashlu Khan, was

appointed lord chamberlain (*amir-i-hajib*). His cousin, Sher Khan, was appointed governor of Lahore and Bhatinda. Balban, who had acted as the real prime minister from the very first day of the reign, was formally appointed *naib-i-mamlikat* in 1249. The same year he gave his daughter in marriage to the young sultan which further strengthened his position and raised him head and shoulder above other Turkish nobles. Thus Balban monopolised power and used it for the advantage of himself, his relations and the Turkish state in the country.

Balban's temporary eclipse: Rayhan becomes prime minister, 1253

Balban's ascendancy and his unscrupulous use of power led to the rise of a party against him with Imad-ud-din Rayhan, a Hindu convert, at its head. Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, who seems to have resented the unbridled exercise of authority by his prime minister, became a party to the conspiracy and issued orders for the dismissal of Balban and his brother. They were directed to leave the court and proceed to their respective provinces. A fresh distribution of offices now took place. Rayhan became prime minister. The office of wazir went to Junaidi. The historian Minhaj was removed from the office of chief *qazi* which was given to Shamsh-ud-din. Sher Khan, Balban's cousin, was removed from the governorship of Bhatinda and Multan which were placed under the charge of Arslan Khan. Thus the key positions in the state came to be held by Rayhan's nominees. Rayhan has been condemned for this *coup*. He has been called a 'renegade Hindu', 'a vile upstart', 'a usurper' and 'a conspirator'. The fact, however, is that he was as good a Musalman as any Turk and was neither a ruffian nor a scoundrel. He was a clever politician who exploited the king's dissatisfaction against the arrogant Balban and his party and established his own authority in the latter's place. He was a leader of the party of the Indian Musalmans whose number was growing with rapidity and who had begun taking interest in the politics of the time. The foreign Turks and their partisans were as much hostile to Indian Musalmans as to the Hindus. They could not tolerate an Indian Muslim holding any position of importance in the administration and hence contemporary writers used unbecoming epithets to describe Rayhan's character and his *coup* of 1253.

Re-instatement of Balban, 1254

Rayhan's administration, though popular with the lower classes, could not last long. The Turkish nobles at the court and in the provinces would not tolerate an Indian Muslim as the *de facto* head of the government. They combined under the leadership of Balban and decided to take action. Their united armies proceeded towards the capital in 1254. The sultan, thereupon, issued out of Delhi and encamped near Samana. A contest between the two was imminent but Mahmud lost heart and was obliged to agree to the proposal of the insurgents to dismiss Rayhan (1254). Accordingly, Rayhan was transferred to Badaun and from there, a little after, to Baharaich. Balban was reappointed *naib* and allowed to fill important offices with his nominees. The historian Minhaj got back his post of the chief *qazi*. The ascendancy of the Turkish nobility was now unquestioned and it continued till the end of Mahmud's reign.

Balban suppresses rebellions

Balban now resumed his policy of consolidating the authority of the crown. He decided to put down rebellions and to force the provinces of the Sultanate to return to allegiance. Bangal had for some time been in a disturbed condition. Tughan Khan, the governor, behaved like a king and repudiated the authority of Delhi. He even invaded Awadh. Balban soon found a pretext to interfere in the affairs of Bangal when Tughan Khan, who had been defeated by the raja of Jajnagar in Orissa, appealed to Delhi for help. Balban sent an army for his assistance under Tamur Khan, who was instructed to punish Tughan and take charge of Bangal from him. He was able to accomplish this work. Tughan was compensated by the grant of Awadh and he died immediately after (1246). But Bangal was destined to give more trouble to the ruler of Delhi. One of Tughan's successors in that province, Yuzbak-i-Tughril Khan, assumed regal title, struck coins and read the *khutba* in his name about 1255. But he was killed in an expedition to Kamarupa in or about 1257 after which the supremacy of Delhi over Bangal was re-established. Within three or four years there was again trouble in Bangal. Arslan Khan, governor of Kara, occupied Lakhanauti and ruled Bangal as an independent ruler. The province continued its career of independence till the end of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud's reign.

In the north-west, too, Balban had to deal with rebellious governors. The restoration of the Delhi authority over that region

was imperfect. This was due to three causes, namely, (1) the presence at Baniyan of Saif-ud-din Hasan Qarlugh who was an ambitious ruler and wanted to extend his dominion to Multan and Sindh, (2) the constant pressure of the Mongols, and (3) the disloyalty of the local officers who were anxious to carve out a fortune for themselves by intrigues with Delhi and the Mongols in Persia. In 1249 Saif-ud-din Hasan Qarlugh occupied Multan. He was, however, compelled to abandon it soon after. A few years later, Kashlu Khan, governor of Multan and Uch, repudiated allegiance to Delhi and became a vassal of Hulagu, the Mongol ruler of Persia. He entered into an alliance with another rebellious governor, named Qutlugh Khan of Awadh, and the two made an attempt to capture Delhi. But the project failed owing to the vigilance and activity of Balban. An understanding seems to have been arrived at between Delhi and Hulagu who sent an envoy to Delhi to assure the Sultan that the Mongols would respect the north-western frontier of India. But trouble continued to reign in the Panjab. Even Lahore passed into the hands of the Mongols in 1254. Only a small portion of the Panjab, namely that in the south-east, remained a part of Delhi, while the rest, namely that in the north-west, came under the Mongol sphere of influence. Multan and Sindh, however, remained parts of Delhi.

One of the most difficult tasks of Balban was to resist the numerous Hindu attempts to regain their independence. His first task was to subjugate the disaffected people of the Doab. This kept him engaged for months during which bitter fighting took place. Balban defeated a notable chieftain in the fertile valley of the Yamuna, whom Minhaj calls 'Dalaki-wa-Malaki' identified by H. C. Ray with Trilokyavarma of the Chandela dynasty (*Dynastic History*, Vol. II, pp. 720-30), slaughtered a large number of men and carried away women and children into slavery. Next, he took upon himself the task of chastising the turbulent people of Mewat, the region south of Delhi. Here, too, he displayed his usual brutality. He led numerous expeditions against Ranthambhor which was eventually conquered. In 1247 he suppressed a rising of the Chandela chief of Kalinjar. In 1251 he led an expedition against the Hindu ruler of Gwalior. But he made no attempt to establish Turkish rule in Malwa and Central India.

Death of Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud

No information is available about the last days of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud's reign. The *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, the only first-rate authority on the period, comes to an abrupt end about the middle of the year 1260, and our next authority, namely, Zia-ud-din Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* commences its account from the accession of Balban. The Sultan, however, seems to have lived a peaceful life and died a pre-mature death in 1265 without leaving any male issue. He was succeeded by Balban.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The House of Iltutmish

(1) Shams-ud-din Iltutmish

Nasir-ud-din	(2) Rukun-ud-din Firoz	(3) Raziah	(4) Muiz-ud-din Bahram	(6) Nasir-ud-din Mahmud	Daughter m.
	(5) Ala-ud-din Masud			(7) Baha-ud-din Balban (captures the throne)	

7

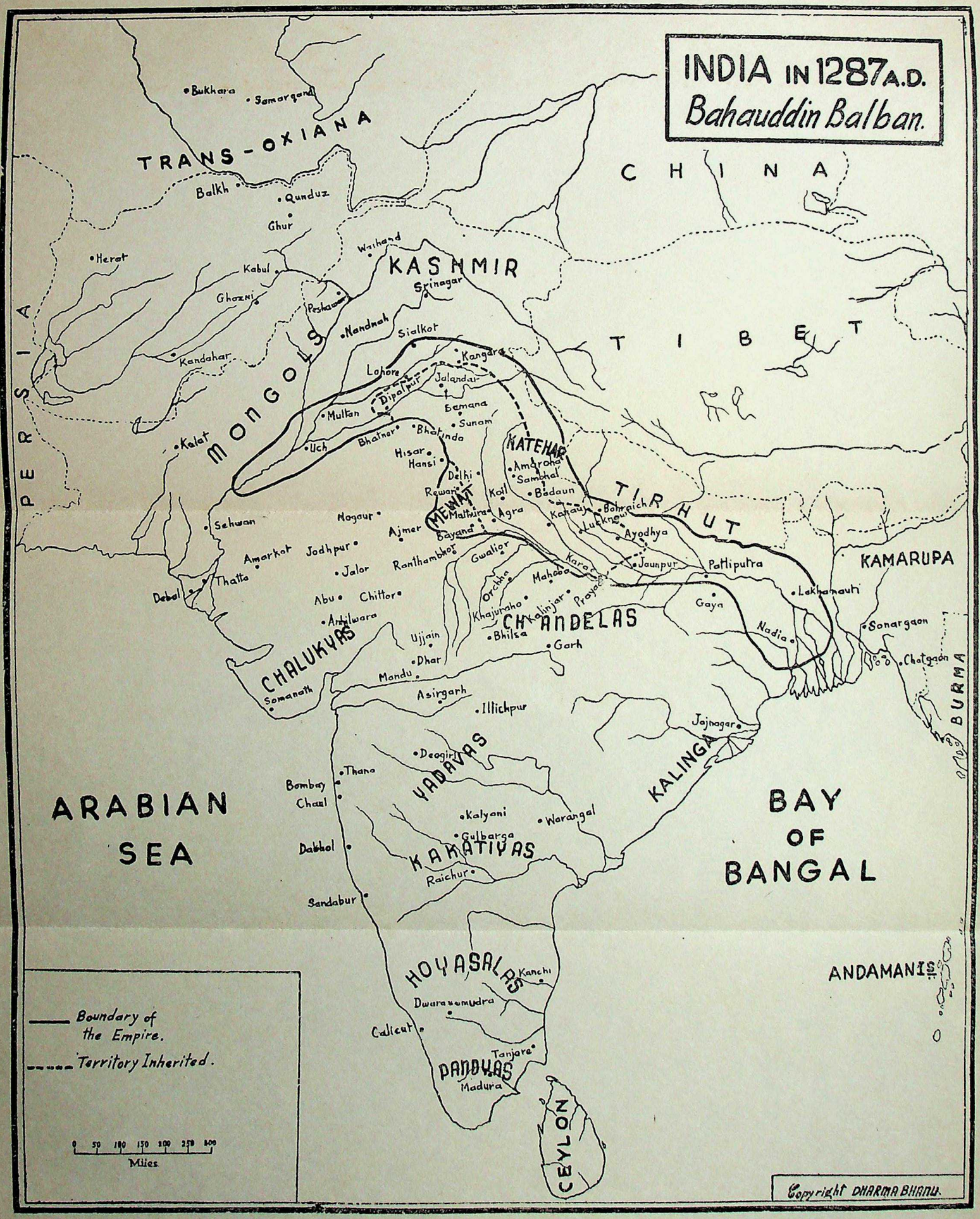
BALBAN AND HIS SUCCESSORS

BALBAN, 1265-1287

Early life

The original name of Balban was Baha-ud-din and, like Iltutmish, he was an Ilbari Turk. His father was a Khan of 10,000 families. In his early youth Balban was captured by the Mongols, who carried him to Ghazni and sold him to one Khwaja Jamal-ud-din of Basra. The Khwaja took him to Delhi where he was purchased by Iltutmish. Baha-ud-din showed signs of future promise. Iltutmish enrolled him as a member of the famous corps of 'the Forty Slaves'. His intelligence, ability and loyalty won recognition and he was promoted to be *amir-i-shikar* (lord of the hunt) by Raziah. He offered his co-operation to the nobles who formed a faction against Raziah and assisted them in deposing the queen. Bahram, the next ruler, granted him the fief of Rewari in Gurgaon district in the Panjab. Very soon after, the district of Hansi was added to it. Balban's wise administration of the district seems to have improved the material condition of the people in his charge. He organised an expedition against the Mongols and compelled them to raise the siege of Uch in 1256. He seems to have been responsible for the deposition of Masud and raising Nasir-ud-din Mahmud to the throne. In 1246 he became the principal adviser of the new Sultan. A few years after, he established relationship with the Sultan by marrying his daughter to him. He was now given the title of Ulugh Khan and appointed *naib-i-mamlikat*. His position was further strengthened by the failure of Rayhan's intrigue against him, and he was now the most important man in the Sultanate of Delhi.

Balban's work as the naib of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud has already been given. He usurped all authority, but exercised it in the interest of the crown. As the royal deputy, he infused vigour into the administration and checked the forces of disintegration. He successfully resisted Hindu attempts to recover their lost dominion and freedom, and he checked the Mongol progress in the direction of


INDIA IN 1287 A.D.
Bahauddin Balban.
TRANS-OXIANA
CHINA
TIBET
PERSIA
KASHMIR
MONGOLS
KATEHAR
TIRHUT
MEWAT
KAMARUPA
CHANDELAS
CHALUKYAS
YADAVAS
KALINGA
KAKATIYAS
HOYASALAS
PANDYAS
CEYLON
BURMA
ANDAMANIS
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
Bukhara
Samarqand
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Kalat
Waihand
Srinagar
Peshawar
Nandnah
Sialkot
Kangara
Lahore
Jalandar
Dipalpur
Bemana
Sunam
Multan
Uch
Bhatner
Bhatinda
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
Rewari
Kaul
Amarona
Sambhal
Badaun
Kanauj
Bahraich
Lucknow
Ayodhya
Jaunpur
Patliputra
Lakhamauti
Gaya
Nadia
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
Sehwan
Nagaur
Ajmer
Mathura
Agra
Bayana
Amarkot
Jodhpur
Jalor
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Karac
Mahoba
Orchha
Prayag
Khajuraho
Kalinjar
Bhilsa
Garh
Thatta
Debal
Abu
Chittor
Anhilwara
Ujjain
Dhar
Mandu
Somanath
Asirgarh
Illichpur
Jajnagar
Deogiri
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Kalyani
Warangal
Gulbarga
Dabhol
Raichur
Sandabur
Kanchi
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
Tanjore
Madura
Boundary of the Empire.
Territory Inherited.
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
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Delhi. His services to the Sultanate of Delhi as naib were indeed great.

His accession

Later writers, like Ibn Battuta and Isami, hold that Nasir-ud-din Mahmud was poisoned by Balban who was anxious to usurp the throne. This story is discounted by some modern scholars. Although Balban was already the *de facto* ruler and Nasir-ud-din Mahmud had no son, he was old and would not wait indefinitely to satisfy his ambition of wearing the crown. He is said, as is hinted by his own son, Bughra Khan, to have poisoned the youthful sultan to attain to his cherished desire. Be that as it may, on Nasir-ud-din Mahmud's death, in 1265, Balban, who was already in possession of power, carried out his enthronement and assumed the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Balban.

Restoration of the Crown's prestige; Balban's theory of kingship

Balban's immediate task was to restore the prestige of the crown. His long political experience had shown him that without the destruction of the pretensions of the Turkish nobility, the crown would enjoy no authority and command no prestige from its subjects. He had seen that the Turkish military aristocracy, of which he was a member, had degraded the Sultan to the position of a mere peer. The historian Barani tells us that during the last days of Nasir-ud-din's rule the office of the Sultan enjoyed no prestige and that people had lost all fear of, and respect for, the king. "Fear of the governing power," remarks the historian, "which is the basis of all good government and the source of the glory and splendour of the State, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition." Balban had resolved to put an end to this sorry state of affairs and to raise the power and prestige of the crown so as to inspire fear in the hearts of all his subjects. Balban believed in a theory which was akin to the theory of divine right of kings. He expounded his views on the subject to his son, Bughra Khan, in these words : "The heart of the king is the special repository of God's favour and in this he has no equal among mankind." On another occasion he emphasised the sacredness of the king's person. He believed in his inherent despotism. His conviction was that unalloyed despotism alone could exact obedience

from his subjects and ensure the security of the State. In order, therefore, to be a successful despot, he sought increased personal prestige for himself by claiming descent from the mythical Turkish hero, Afrasiyab of Turan, and keeping himself in studied aloofness, and cultivated dignified reserve. On his accession he gave up drinking wine and all jovial company. He maintained a very grave demeanour and refused to speak to common people. He regulated the court ceremonial after the Persian model and copied the court etiquette of the Selijuqs and Khwarizmi kings of Central Asia. He appointed tall and fearsome bodyguards who were to stand round the king's person with their swords drawn and dazzling in the sun. He instituted the *sijda* (prostration) and *paibos* (kissing the monarch's feet) in the court as normal forms of salutation for the king. He introduced the annual celebration of the Persian Nauroz to heighten the splendour of his court. He prohibited the drinking of wine by his courtiers and officials, prescribed for them a special dress and a fixed ceremonial from which no deviation was permitted. No one was allowed to laugh or even smile in his *darbar*. Balban submitted himself to these rigid formalities while in public. He would not meet and talk to smaller nobles, to say nothing of ordinary people. He despised men of low birth. A rich merchant of Delhi sought an interview with the Sultan and offered him all his wealth, but Balban refused to see him. When the news of the death of his eldest son, prince Muhammad, reached him, he remained firm and unmoved and went as usual through the daily routine of administration, though in his private apartment he wept bitterly. Thus, by rigid ceremonial and dignity, Balban restored the prestige of the crown. The fact that the Sultanate of Delhi in his days was the only first-rate Muslim State left intact inspite of the Mongol fury and havoc added to Balban's prestige.

The destruction of 'the Forty'

Balban realised that one great impediment in the way of the Sultan's absolute despotism was the presence of the Turkish aristocracy at the head of which stood a select body known as 'the Forty'. This body of the leading Turks had reduced the crown to a mere figurehead and divided amongst its members all the great fiefs of the Sultanate and all the highest offices in the State. It had come into existence in the time of Iltutmish and, in fact, all the members of this body were originally Iltutmish's slaves. The Sultan had

succeeded in preserving the royal dignity and keeping 'the Forty' under proper control. But after his death there was a bitter struggle between 'the Forty' and the Sultan. It was 'the Forty' that won and imposed its will on Iltutmish's successors. In order to make the throne safe for himself and for his descendants, Balban wanted to destroy this organisation. First of all, he promoted junior Turks to important positions and placed them on a position of equality with 'the Forty'. Then he inflicted condign punishments on the members of this group for slight faults in order to repress them and reduce their importance in the eyes of the people. Malik Baqbaq, governor of Badaun and a great noble and a member of 'the Forty', caused one of his servants to be beaten to death. When a complaint was made against him, Balban ordered Malik Baqbaq to be publicly flogged. Another great noble, named Haibat Khan, who was governor of Awadh, was found guilty of killing a man while dead drunk with wine. Balban ordered Haibat Khan to be flogged with 500 stripes and then to be delivered to the widow of the victim. Haibat Khan purchased his freedom by paying 20,000 tankas to the widow and was so overcome with shame that he remained confined to his house till the day of his death. The Sultan ordered Amin Khan, governor of Awadh, who was defeated by Tughril of Bangal, to be hanged at the gate of the city of Ayodhya (Awadh). Balban is said to have poisoned his cousin, Sher Khan, who was an able and prominent member of 'the Forty' and was governor of Bhatinda, Bhatner, Samana and Sunam. The Sultan was jealous of his ability and ambition. After his death there was no potential opponent to the execution of Balban's policy of despotism. By such crooked and barbarous measures he destroyed 'the Forty', and cowed down those of its members that escaped death and dismissal.

Organisation of the spy system

Balban's policy of despotism could be carried out successfully as he was correctly and promptly informed about the happening at the capital and in the provinces and about the ambitious schemes of his nobles and officials. In fact, the efficient working of administration depended upon Balban's spy system on whose organisation he spent much time and money. The king placed secret reporters in every department and appointed secret news-writers in every province and, in fact, in every district. He took great pains in ascertaining the character and loyalty of the news-writers. He gave them good

salary and made them independent of governors and commanders. They were required to transmit to him every day the news of important occurrences. If a news-writer failed to do his duty, he was given exemplary punishment. The news-writer of Badaun who had failed to report the conduct of Malik Baqbaq, was hanged over the city gate. The well-organised system of espionage, thus, became one of the most important instruments of Balban's despotism.

Reorganisation of the army

The main prop of Balban's despotism was his powerful army. He concentrated his attention on its reorganisation. From the time of Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Turkish soldiers had been granted assignments of land in lieu of their services. Some of them had been allotted fiefs before these were conquered and annexed to the Sultanate of Delhi. Iltutmish had followed the old practice of granting land to many soldiers on condition of military service. The successors of these soldiers continued to enjoy their lands although many of them did not perform any military duties, and a good number of them were irregular in rendering service to the state. They looked upon these lands as belonging to them by right. Balban ordered an enquiry into the history of these service-tenures and he found that much of the land was in the hands of old men who were unfit for military service. In many cases widows and orphans held land, but performed no service whatever. He ordered the resumption of these lands from old men and from widows and orphans and gave them pensions in cash. As regards youngmen who were fit for military service, he allowed them to retain their assignments; but the collection of revenue of their villages was to be made by the central government and payment made to them in cash. These orders evoked loud protests from the assignees who approached Fakhr-ud-din, the aged *kotwal* of Delhi and a friend of the king, to intercede on their behalf. The *kotwal's* pleading obliged Balban to cancel the order regarding the aged holders of land. The reform, therefore, did not prove to be effective. The policy of grant of land to the soldiers in lieu of cash payments continued as before. The custom of sending proxies—ill-equipped, hired men—by the troopers, however, came to an end.

Balban placed the army under the charge of Imad-ul-mulk, a very competent and vigilant officer, and appointed him army

minister (*diwan-i-ariz*). He was made independent of the finance minister's control. Imad-ul-mulk took special interest in matters relating to recruitment, salary and equipment of troops. He enforced military discipline and, by honest and wise policy, made the army a powerful instrument of force. There was, of course, no revolutionary change introduced in military organisation, but Balban's vigilance and strictness and the army minister's attention to details raised the efficiency and tone of the fighting machine upon which the strength of the Sultanate depended.

Suppression of rebellions

Students of medieval Indian history have missed a patent fact, namely, that during the entire period of the so-called Slave rule no addition of territory was made by any of the Turkish rulers from Qutub-ud-din Aibak down to the death of Kaiqubad in 1290. Their time and energy were quite exhausted in reconquering what Muhammad of Ghur had conquered but had been lost to his successors. When Balban became king he was faced with the old question, namely, whether he should make fresh conquests of territory from Hindu rulers and annex it to Delhi. Some of his close friends advised him to follow the above course; but the Sultan, who was a realist, felt that it would mean taking an undue risk and exposing Delhi to the Mongols and subjecting the state to internal disorder. He, therefore, decided not to make fresh conquests but to regain the old and to consolidate what the Sultanate already possessed.

Even this task was stupendous. Our people had practically thrown off the Turkish yoke in most parts of Hindustan. They had expelled the Turkish governors and soldiers and were following the policy of ravaging the Turkish territory and preventing cultivation of land and collection of revenue by the Turkish officers. In the Doab and in Awadh there was perpetual rebellion. The Sultan's men could not collect any revenue in Katehar (modern Rohilkhand). The Rajputs made the roads unsafe by their depredations. Rebellious Rajput chiefs had their strongholds in Badaun, Amroha, Patiali and Kampil from where they issued out, committed excesses, prevented the cultivators from cultivating the land, plundered the way-farers and then returned to their hiding places. The area round the capital city of Delhi was infested by robbers who plundered the people of Delhi practically every day and the city gates had to be closed

after the afternoon prayers. The condition in the distant provinces, such as, Bangal, Bihar and Rajasthan, was much worse. Our patriotic leaders in that age cleverly followed the policy of plunder and devastation, so as not to give sufficient time to the Turks to consolidate their hold in the country. There was, however, lack of first-rate leadership which prevented them from uniting together and mustering adequate forces to fight and expel the Turks from the country.

Balban was not deterred by the enormity of the task from carrying out his resolution of putting down rebellions. In the very first year of his accession, he succeeded in making the vicinity of Delhi safe from robbers and rebels. He punished them with a heavy hand and cleared the jungles and built four forts in the rural area around Delhi and garrisoned them with ferocious Afghan troops. Next year, he undertook operations in the Doab and in Awadh. He divided the area into a number of military commands and appointed energetic officers to clear the forests and to conduct a ruthless drive against the local Hindu chieftains and their robber, though liberty-loving, bands. He established military posts at Bhojapur, Patiali, Kampil and Jalali, all of which were garrisoned with semi-barbarous Afghan troops. Thereafter, Balban proceeded to Katehar. There he ordered his men to attack the villages, to set fire to the houses and to slay the entire adult male population. Innocent women and children were dragged into slavery. By these barbarous methods he struck terror into the hearts of the people and depopulated the entire region. In every village and jungle heaps of human corpses were left rotting. The remnants of the people, lurking here and there, were thoroughly cowed down. We are told by the historian, Barani, that the Kateharias never after raised their heads and the entire region became safe for the traveller, the peasant and the government officer.

Expeditions were sent to reduce the rebellious territories in Rajputana and Bundelkhand, but the exertions of the Delhi army met with only partial success.

Recovery of Bangal

As usual, Bangal gave considerable trouble to Balban. In 1279, encouraged by the Mongol threat on the north-west and the old age of the Sultan, Tughril Khan, the governor, who had sent in his submission during the first year of his reign, raised the stand-

ard of rebellion. He assumed the title of Sultan, struck coins and caused the *khutba* be read in his name. Balban despatched Amin Khan, governor of Awadh, to reduce the rebel to obedience. Amin Khan was, however, defeated and Balban was so enraged that he ordered him to be hanged over the city gate of Awadh. He then sent another army under Tirmiti. He fared no better than his predecessor. A third army is said to have been similarly beaten and driven off. Balban's patience was now exhausted and he made preparations to march to Bangal in person. At the head of an army, two lakhs strong, and accompanied by his second son, Bughra Khan, he appeared in the vicinity of Lakhanauti, which was, however, abandoned by Tughril who had fled towards East Bangal. Balban pursued the rebel and reached Sonargaon near Dacca. Tughril was captured far away from Dacca by Bektars and put to death by him at Hajinagar in East Bangal. The Sultan then turned to Lakhanauti and there inflicted a terrible punishment upon Tughril's followers. "On either side of the principal bazaar," writes the historian Barani, "in a street more than two miles in length, a row of stakes was set up and the adherents of Tughril were impaled upon them. None of the beholders had ever seen a spectacle so terrible, and many swooned with terror and disgust." His revenge being thus satisfied, the Sultan appointed Bughra Khan governor of Bangal and advised him to remain faithful to Delhi. "Understand me," he said to his second son, "and forget not that if the governors of Hind or Sindh, of Malwa or Gujarat, of Lakhanauti or Sonargaon, shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi then such punishment, as has fallen on Tughril and his dependants, will fall upon them, their wives, their children and all their adherents." Satisfying himself that Bangal would not henceforth rise into a rebellion, Balban returned to Delhi. He then took steps to punish the deserters of the Delhi army who had joined Tughril but were now captives in the Sultan's hands in the same manner as he had punished his adherents at Lakhanauti. But, at the intercession of a qazi, he modified his plan. Of the offenders, those who were ordinary men were pardoned, those who enjoyed a slightly higher status were punished for a temporary period and those who held still higher positions were thrown into prison. But the officers among them were mounted on buffaloes and paraded through the streets of Delhi.

The Mongol invasion

Reference has been made to the threat of the Mongol invasion on the north-western frontier of the Sultanate which prevented Balban from following an aggressive policy of conquest. For some time past Mongols had been appearing on our north-western frontier and had brought Lahore under their sphere of influence. In that direction only Multan and Sindh remained in the hands of Delhi's agents, and even these two provinces were exposed to invasions from the north-west. Balban's policy was to strengthen the north-western frontier of the Delhi kingdom by building a line of forts along that frontier and garrisoning them with able-bodied Afghan troops. He placed the entire region under the charge of his warrior cousin, Sher Khan Sanqar, whose courage struck terror into the hearts of the Mongols and frightened turbulent tribes like the Khokhars. His death, in or about 1270, removed a competent warden of the marches. Balban now divided the entire frontier region into two parts. The province of Sunam and Samana was placed under the charge of his younger son, Bughra Khan, while Multan, Sindh and Lahore were given to his eldest son, prince Muhammad Khan. Prince Muhammad was an able soldier, a competent administrator and, above all, a man of great literary taste. In his service two of the greatest poets of India writing in Persian, named Amir Khusrav and Amir Hasan, began their literary career. He even extended an invitation to the greatest Persian poet of the time, Shaikh Sadi, but the latter politely declined the honour on the ground of old age. Prince Muhammad took effective measures to check the advance of the Mongols. But the latter ravaged the upper Panjab and succeeded in crossing the river Satlaj. The two princes, Muhammad and Bughra Khan, sent their contingents and their united troops defeated and drove away the invaders. But the Mongols re-appeared early in 1286, and this time prince Muhammad was killed in a contest with them in February the same year. The news of the death of his eldest son completely prostrated Balban, then aged above eighty; but the old Sultan continued his policy of taking interest in the defence of the north-western frontier. He reoccupied Lahore; but otherwise his success against the mongols was not great. The authority of Delhi did not extend beyond Lahore. The region west of the river Ravi continued to be under the control of the Mongols.

Death of Balban

Reference has been made to the death of prince Muhammad, the eldest son of the Sultan, in whom had centred all the future hopes of the dynasty. The prince had already been nominated for the succession. His death administered a fatal shock to the old Sultan. On receipt of the news, Balban continued discharging his kingly duties without apparent concern; but during the night in the seclusion of his private apartment, he wept bitterly. Indeed, he never recovered from the shock. Perceiving that his end was approaching fast, he summoned Bughra Khan, his second son, to stay with him during his illness; but Bughra Khan was an irresponsible man and was afraid of his father's stern nature. So he slipped away to Lakhanauti. Balban now nominated prince Muhammad's son, Kai Khusrav, as his heir. Within a few days of this nomination, he died about the middle of 1287.

An estimate of Balban

Balban held the reins of government for about forty years, first as deputy of Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud and then as Sultan. Throughout this long period he had one single aim, namely, that of consolidating the infant Turkish state in Hindustan. There is no doubt that in this task he attained a great success. He restored internal peace and protected the Sultanate from the Mongols by making admirable arrangements for the defence of the north-western frontier. He eschewed aggressive conquest of the territory of the neighbouring Hindu chiefs, not because he was against violating the sanctity of independent states, but because he believed, and rightly too, that aggressive warfare for further addition of territory would impair the efficiency of the Sultanate and would unnecessarily strain the limited resources and manpower of the Turks in a foreign country. Balban raised the prestige of the crown which had fallen low in the days of his predecessors. He crushed the big feudal lords of the Turkish aristocracy and, thereby, gave a new colour to the Turkish state in the country. He was, without doubt, an able and stern administrator and a successful ruler.

He achieved his object by ruthlessness and by striking terror all round. His punishments were unnecessarily harsh and cruel and even barbarous; but it must be admitted that they were well calculated to achieve the objective Balban had at heart. Balban was

a rigid Sunni Musalman. He punctiliously discharged all the religious duties enjoined by Islam. He was fond of the company of pious Muslim divines. It is said that he always dined in their company and conversed with them on Muslim law and religion. He was fanatically inclined and was intolerant of the religion of the vast majority of his subjects. Devoid of human sympathy, he had no regard for age, rank or sex.

Balban was a great patron of learning. He gave refuge to many learned men and princes from Central Asia. These had fled from their homeland to save themselves from the clutches of the Mongols. They were granted liberal maintenance allowances and allotted separate quarters in the capital. Balban's court was a centre of Islamic culture and learning. He loved architecture. Like all his predecessors, he was not a constructive genius. He possessed an orderly, but not an inventive intellect. He did not bring into existence new civil or military institutions; but he made the old ones work more smoothly and efficiently by his constant vigilance and attention. Balban's theory of kingship was akin to that of divine right of kings, and the key-note of his policy was unalloyed despotism. He was a believer in the theory of the racial superiority of the Turks. He did not like to associate non-Turks with his administration and was altogether against the employment of Indian Muslims in State service. He administered a sharp rebuke to an officer for having employed a native Musalman as a clerk in the district office at Amroha. He had faith in the superiority of 'blue blood'. He looked down upon common people and did not condescend to talk to those whom he considered to be men of low birth. By temperament, training and conviction he was incapable of understanding the people's point of view and winning their goodwill.

Balban's most notable achievement was ensuring the safety of the Turkish state and giving it a new lease of life. His next great success lay in raising the prestige of the crown. His third achievement was giving absolute peace and order. These were no ordinary achievements considering the difficulties and dangers that beset the Turkish state in that critical age. His place among the so-called Slave kings is next only to that of Iltutmish.

KAIQUBAD, 1287-1290

After Balban's death his nobles, led by Fakhr-ud-din, the

kotwal of Delhi, set aside the aged monarch's nominee, Kai Khusrav, and placed Bughra Khan's son, Kaiqubad, on the throne. The new ruler assumed the title of Muiz-ud-din Kaiqubad.

At the time of his accession Kaiqubad was seventeen years old. He had been brought up under the strict guardianship of his puritanical grandfather, Balban. He was not allowed to cast 'a glance at a fair face' or to taste wine. Now that he found himself quite free and master of a big kingdom, his pent-up desires and passions found expression in unrestrained indulgence in wine, women and gaiety. His example was followed by his courtiers who had become sick of the restraint imposed upon their emotions by the late king. Such a young, inexperienced and pleasure-loving Sultan was bound to neglect administration which was left to shift for itself. Power passed into the hands of an unscrupulous intriguer, named Nizam-ud-din, who was the son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-din, the kotwal of Delhi. Kaiqubad became a puppet in his hands. The Mongols took advantage of the change and invaded the Panjab under their leader, Tamur Khan, and advanced as far as Samana. Fortunately, Malik Baqbaq defeated them near Lahore and brought a thousand of them prisoners to Delhi where they were put to death. Within the kingdom, law and order were disregarded by ambitious people. Nizam-ud-din sedulously tried to remove all competent rivals from his path of ambition with a view to seize the throne for himself.

Kaiqubad's father, Bughra Khan, who was governor of Bangal since the days of Balban, having been informed of the developments at Delhi, proceeded towards the imperial capital at the head of a powerful army. It is said that his intentions were to seize the throne from the feeble hands of his son. According to another authority his only desire was to administer a wholesome advice to Kaiqubad to give up the pursuit of pleasures and to attend to business. Be that as it may, he reached the Ghaghra near Ayodhya in 1288. Kaiqubad proceeded against him at the head of an equally big force. Nizam-ud-din did his best to prevent a meeting between the father and the son and to instigate Kaiqubad to fight; but some faithful servants of the time of Balban successfully exerted their influence to bring about a reconciliation between the two. It was decided that Bughra Khan would pay homage to the Sultan of Delhi who was the over-lord of the ruler of Bangal. Bughra Khan agreed and paid homage to Kaiqubad. At the end of the ceremony Kaiqubad broke down,

fell at his father's feet and conducted him to the throne. They remained together for some days and, at the time of parting, Bughra Khan advised his son to mend his ways and to get rid of such an evil counsellor as Nizam-ud-din. After this meeting they returned to their respective places. Kaiqubad heeded his father's advice for a short time only. He temporarily gave up indulgence and had Nizam-ud-din despatched by poison. Thereafter, he relapsed into his old lethargy and devotion to sensual pleasures. After Nizam-ud-din's death a Khalji noble, named Jalal-ud-din Firoz, was given the important fief of Bulandshahr and was appointed commander of the Sultan's army. This appointment brought about a rift at the court. The Turkish nobles, who looked down upon the Khaljis as non-Turks, were hostile to Jalal-ud-din. Soon after this Kaiqubad was struck down with paralysis. The Turkish nobles, therefore, raised to the throne his infant son under the title of Shams-ud-din Kayumars. They organised the Turks and wanted to put Jalal-ud-din Khalji to death, but Jalal-ud-din was on his guard. He forestalled their design and occupied Delhi. The victor caused Kaiqubad to be murdered and set himself up as regent of the new infant king. The regency was only a transitional arrangement and it could not work. Jalal-ud-din set aside Kayumars, put him to death and ascended the throne in March 1290. The so-called Slave dynasty thus came to an end.

8

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SO-CALLED SLAVE KINGS

Extent of the kingdom

It is not generally known that the extent of the Turkish kingdom established in Hindustan by Muhammad of Ghur remained constant throughout the rule of the succeeding monarchs, known as Slave kings. If there was any change, it was one of contraction and not of expansion. None of the so-called Slave rulers made any appreciable additions to the territory conquered by Muhammad of Ghur and his lieutenant, Qutub-ud-din, before he became king. The Hindu rulers within the boundaries of the Sultanate of Delhi made repeated attempts during our period to throw off the Turkish yoke. Even a casual perusal of the contemporary authority, the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* of Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, shows that year after year the Sultans had to undertake expeditions to put down refractory Hindu chiefs and recalcitrant Hindu peasantry. One and the same piece of land had to be conquered time and again by practically every Sultan. Under these circumstances the problem for the Slave kings was how to retain what had come to them from their predecessors and not to add to it by an aggressive warfare. The boundaries of the Sultanate of Delhi fluctuated from reign to reign. In general, it may, however, be said that the Sultanate was bounded by the Himalayan Tarai in the north and by a zigzag line on the south that included northern half of Bangal, north Bihar, part of Bundelkhand, Gwalior, Ranthambhor, Ajmer and Nagaur and passing north of Jaisalmer separated Gujarat from Sindh. In the east, half of Bangal up to a line falling much short of Dacca may be said to have been part of the dominion of the Sultanate. On the north-west the river Jhelam was usually the boundary which sometimes shrunk to the river Beas. Lahore was, generally speaking, included in the Delhi kingdom, and so also Multan and Sindh. The region of the Salt Range, the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the north-western and north-eastern corners of the modern Panjab were outside the limits of the Sultanate. But even within these limits there were many independent Hindu

chieftains, particularly in the Himalyan Tarai, the northern portion of the Doab and in northern Rajasthan and Bundelkhand, which were never really completely subjugated. Hence, the so-called Slave kings did not enjoy absolute sovereignty within the limits of their kingdom.

The nature of the State

The Turkish State in India, like all Islamic States, was a theocracy. It was based on the Islamic law as given in the *Quran* and expounded by jurists. The *Quranic* law was religious or Canon law and was known as *shariat* or the Law. All civil laws were merged in the *shariat*. The State had a religion of its own which was Islam. and, in strict theory, all the resources of the State were available for religious propaganda. In actual practice, however, this theory underwent many modifications. It was inevitable in a country like India, where a vast majority of the population was non-Muslim and where political conditions differed greatly from those contemplated by the Muslim jurists.

According to strict Islamic theory, the real king of a Muslim state is God. The earthly ruler is only His agent, bound to enforce His will as revealed in the *Quran*. The sovereignty was based on election by the *millat*, that is, the entire body of male Muslims in the country; but this theory, which could not work successfully even in Arabia, was reduced to a farce in Hindustan. The early Turks, who came to our country, had no fixed law of succession and no recognised procedure that they might follow in the case of a disputed succession. The choice of the Sultan during the thirteenth century was, generally speaking, limited to the surviving members of the deceased ruler's family. Thus, birth, ability and nomination by the dead king and the support given by the nobles—these factors very often decided the election. It was, however, the decisive voice of the powerful nobles that determined the selection of a ruler. It is worthy of note that the topmost nobles usually preferred personal convenience to the interest of the State.

The Sultanate of Delhi was a military State and was based on force, not on the consent of the people. The entire territory in its possession was held by powerful Turkish troops. There were established garrisons at the strategic places in the interior of the country. A line of forts was built and garrisoned with troops along its frontiers to serve as military outposts. The government being foreign, it concerned itself with two duties only, that is, the collection

of revenue and the maintenance of law and order. It had little to do with the welfare of the public.

The only citizens of the early Turkish state in India were Muslims, notably Turkish Musalmans. The Hindus, who formed a vast majority of the population of the Sultanate of Delhi, were not accorded full rights of citizenship. The non-Muslims were called *zimmis*, that is, people living under guarantee or contract. When the Turks conquered our country, they offered, like other Muslim conquerors, three alternatives to the conquered people, namely, conversion to Islam, or death, or living like a subject and degraded people on payment of the *jizya*. A vast majority of the conquered people agreed to pay the *jizya*, and they were allowed to live. Several disabilities were imposed upon the *zimmis* who were discriminated against in matters of state employment, civic rights, justice and taxation. Learned Muslim divines (*ulema*), who were supposed to be the custodians of Islamic law, were particularly hostile to the subject people. Their policy aimed at reducing the Hindus to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water. Sometimes a monarch who was particularly servile to the *ulema* pursued a policy of religious persecution of his subjects and attempted systematically to put down idolatry. But in normal times this was an exception rather than the rule. There does not seem to have been any systematic attempt on governmental level at the extermintation of the Hindus. Yet the vast majority of our people were not happy under the early Turkish rule which was foreign. Modern Muslim writers, such as Dr. I. H. Qureshi and Dr. Mahdi Husain, have laboured to prove that there were no disabilities imposed on the non-Muslim population and that the Hindus were happier under the Turkish Sultans than they had been under their own kings. But their arguments, to say the least, are unconvincing and require no comment. It will also be historically wrong to say that the early Turkish Sultans made no attempt to establish religious uniformity in their nascent State by trying to convert the people of the country to their faith.

Relations with the Caliphate

It was originally believed that there was only one Muslim State in the world, namely, the Caliphate, and that its religious and temporal head was the Caliph. But the Caliphate had fallen to pieces by the thirteenth century and several independent Muslim States or nations had come into existence. Yet, by a convenient

political fiction, these new and independent Muslim States recognised the Khalifa, at least in theory, to be their political and religious head or suzerain. They had the Khalifa's name on their coins and in the *khutbas*. This fiction continued even after the Buddhist Hulagu, the great Mongol leader, had taken Baghdad and put the Khalifa to death in 1258. An uncle of the last Khalifa took refuge in Egypt, where he was recognised as the spiritual head by the Sultans of that country. The fiction, thus, continued till the last of the nominal Khalifas resigned his theoretical rights in favour of Sultan Sulaiman II of Constantinople in the sixteenth century.

Mahmud of Ghazni was given the title of Sultan by the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad. Muhammad of Ghur, too, inscribed the name of the Caliph on his coins. It was in the interest of the early Turkish Sultans of Hindustan to pose as the nominees of the Khalifa. They did not like to disregard the tradition of the supposed unity of the Islamic State. Iltutmish was the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi to receive a formal investitute as Sultan from the Khalifa. He introduced the name of the Khalifa of Baghdad on his coins. None of his successors throughout the period of the so-called Slave dynasty was so invested by the theoretical sovereign of the so-called Islamic State. Yet all the rulers of the dynasty continued, in theory, to profess themselves to be the deputies of the Khalifa. It had become a fashion to do so.

THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The Monarch

In actual practice the Sultan of Delhi was a full-fledged sovereign ruler, uncontrolled by any outside agency or authority. The Sultan was a thorough-going despot. He was the supreme executive-head of the kingdom. He was also the fountain-head of justice and the supreme interpreter of the law. Thus he was the temporal head and ruler of all the people in his dominions and the religious head of the Muslim section of the population. His powers were many and unlimited. In actual practice, however, these were circumscribed. He had to listen to the advice of the learned divines or ulema. There was always the fear of a rebellion by the people. The traditional unwritten law of the land had also to be respected; but, as in the final analysis the power of the Sultan depended upon the degree of his military strength, he could, if he was a powerful

man, disregard all the above considerations and rule according to his will. Such rulers were, however, very few. Throughout our period there was only one such personality named Balban. All others, including Iltutmish, had to consult the nobles and to abide by their wishes.

Ministers

The Sultanate of Delhi showed little planning. The central government was a haphazard growth. There were, however, four important ministers at the capital, namely, the *wazir*, the *ariz-i-mamalik*, *diwan-i-insha* and *diwan-i-rasalat*. The *wazir* may be designated as the chief minister. Besides having the charge of revenue and finance departments, he exercised a general supervisory authority over other ministers. The *wazir* was a civilian, but sometimes he had to command an army. He controlled the military pay office. He was assisted by a *naib* and had a large establishment consisting of a number of secretaries and dozens of clerks and accountants. There was a chief accountant or the *mushrif-i-mamalik* and an auditor-general or the *mustawfi-i-mamalik* under him. The second minister was the army minister or the *diwan-i-ariz*. He was in charge of recruitment of troops, their muster-roll, their equipment and efficiency. Besides, he was the paymaster-general of the army. It was his duty to hold reviews of the troops and to see that they were properly equipped and that they discharged their duties efficiently. The third minister was *diwani-i-insha* whose duty it was to draft royal proclamations and despatches. He had a large staff of secretaries and clerks under him. He used to accompany the king and to compile a record of all his activities. The fourth minister was the *diwan-i-rasalat*. He seems to have been in charge of foreign and diplomatic correspondence. His work was to keep in touch with ambassadors and envoys sent to, and received from, foreign courts.

Besides these, there were two other important dignitaries whose importance cannot be exaggerated. Their rank was next to that of the ministers. They were *barid-i-mamalik*, that is, the chief news-writer of the kingdom under whom there were a host of news-writers and spies, and the *qazi-mamalik* or the chief justice of kingdom. This officer was the head of the judiciary and also the incharge of the ecclesiastical department. In the latter capacity he was known as *sadar-i-jahan* or *sadar-us-sudur*.

There were several other high officials at the capital, connected particularly with the royal household, but their rank was lower than

that of the ministers. The most important among these was the *vakil-i-dar* who was something like the comptroller of the royal household. As such, he had to be very near the royal person and wielded considerable influence. The next was *amir-i-hajib*, that is, the master of ceremonies. He enforced the court etiquette and acted as an intermediary between the Sultan and the lower officers and the people. The Sultan granted an honour of interview to the people through this officer. The next officer was *sar-i-jandar*, that is, the commander of the royal bodyguard. Another important dignitary was *amir-i-akhur* or the master of the horse and still another *shahna-i-pilan* or the superintendent of the elephants.

During the reign of some of the Sultans a new office of the *naib-i-mamalikat* was instituted. He was the royal deputy and, as such, enjoyed higher powers than the wazir or the prime minister. But, in normal times, there was no naib and, if there was one, as in the time of Balban, he enjoyed no powers except those that were delegated to him by the Sultan.

The ministers of the central government were appointed by the king and were his servants. They were responsible to him only. They were not supreme in their respective departments, unless the king was a minor or was a puppet in the hands of his nobles. They could not influence a powerful ruler like Balban, and were there to carry out his wishes even in matters of detail.

THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The government of the so-called Slave rulers was not a homogeneous entity but a decentralised system. The structure was loose and made up of military commands. The areas under the military commands were not uniform in size or population or even in income. They had come into existence at various times and were a haphazard growth. These commands carried with them territorial jurisdiction and were called *iqtas*. The term has been translated as *fief* by European writers. The *iqtas* may conveniently be designated as provinces, though the designation is not strictly correct. The holders of *iqtas* were known as *muqtis*. The *muqtis* were, for all practical purposes, governors of their respective jurisdictions and enjoyed great powers. There was no uniformity either of size or of administration in the *iqtas*. The degree of power, political or military, enjoyed by the *muqtis* differed from *iqta* to *iqta*. The

muqti was free to carry on his own administration, subject, of course, to the traditional local usages, to employ his own officers, to collect revenues, to defray expenditure of his administration and to pay the surplus to the central government. In theory, he was subject to the central audit; but in practice he was almost independent. His main duties were the maintenance of law and order in his jurisdiction or province and to carry out the king's commands. He was required to furnish a contingent of troops to the Sultan whenever he was called upon to do so. The *muqti* enjoyed a high salary which was charged on the revenue of his province. He had an army of his own and a big official establishment. The important *iqtas* during our period were Mandawar, Amroha, Sambhal, Badaun, Baran (Bulandshahr), Koil (Aligarh), Awadh, Kara Manikpur, Bayana, Gwalior, Nagaur, Hansi, Multan, Uch, Lahore, Samana, Sunam, Kuhram, Bhatinda and Sarhind.

The *muqtis* or governors were also required to collect revenue from the Sultan's vassals whose principalities were situated within their provinces. These chiefs were Hindu rulers who had been reduced to vassalage by the Sultans. They were required to pay *kharaj* or land revenue and also *jizya*. They, of course, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sultan of Delhi, but were otherwise independent in their own principalities.

The *Khalisah* districts

Besides the *iqtas* there were large areas comprising a set of districts which were governed directly by the central government and not by a *muqti*. These areas were known as *khalisah*. European writers called them crown lands, but they may, more correctly, be termed as 'reserve areas', that is, areas which were not given in assignments and the revenue of which was collected directly by the central revenue ministry. The cultivators in these areas paid their revenues directly to the government; of course, through the headmen of their villages.

There were, perhaps, no sub-divisions like districts and parganas during the so-called Slave period. These divisions, probably, were recognised by the Delhi Sultanate in the fourteenth century.

The army

The army was, of course, the most important branch of administration, as the power of the Sultan depended upon its strength

and efficiency. But, curiously enough, there was no powerful permanent force at the capital which might be called a standing army. The Sultan had, no doubt, his bodyguards under the command of an officer called *sar-i-jandar*, but he depended mostly on the contingents of troops furnished by provincial governors or *muqtis*. The reason seems to be that when the Turks came to India all of them were members of the fighting forces. After, however, they had conquered a large territory and settled down to administer it, they found it necessary to divide the society on the basis of profession. A new class of professional soldiers, thus, came into existence. In the beginning, as all the followers of the invader were fighters, it was not considered necessary to have a standing army. This practice continued even after the invader was transformed into the ruler.

The royal bodyguards increased in number with the expansion of the Sultanate so that with the passage of time they formed the nucleus of a large army. This army, though not permanent, was placed under the management of *ariz-i-mamalik* or the army minister who was responsible for its recruitment, efficiency and payment. The important branches of the army were cavalry and infantry. Most of the prominent soldiers and officers were slaves, such as, the *Muizzi* slaves (slaves of Muiz-ud-din Muhammad of Ghur), *Qutubi* slaves (those of Qutub-ud-din Aibak), and *Shamsi* slaves (those of Shams-ud-din Iltutmish). They were mostly cavalrymen and were considered to be valued troops. There was, of course, no scientific military training, no drill or regimental discipline in those days. The efficiency of the army, therefore, depended mostly upon the ability and attention of the *diwan-i-ariz* and the Sultan.

Besides the central army, the provincial governors maintained their own contingents on the same footing as the king. The provincial army was the governor's own force. He was free in the matter of recruitment, discipline and payment; but, as he was required to send a specified quota for service at the capital, his army must have been controlled to a certain extent by the *ariz-i-mamalik*.

There were two other kinds of troops who may be called special recruits. The special recruits were of two kinds. Firstly, those troops who were enlisted on special occasions to fight a holy war (*jihad*)—naturally against the native princes. Such troops were exclusively Muslim. They were entitled to a share in the plunder according to the *shariat*. Their share was 4/5 of the plunder, 1/5

going to the Sultan. Secondly, there were the volunteers who joined the army of their own accord and brought their own arms and horses.

The Sultan was the supreme commander of the army. In the provinces, the *muqtis* were the commanders of their troops. The *diwan-i-ariz* or *ariz-i-mamalik* was not required to act as the supreme commander, though he sometimes selected troops for a campaign. Only once during our period an army commander was appointed and that was in the time of Raziah. This was a temporary arrangement and after her death the office was abolished. The soldiers were paid mostly by assignments of land and, sometimes, in cash also. It is not clear whether the commander of an army drew his own salary and that of his soldiers or the soldiers were paid individually. Probably, the former was the practice.

The army organisation was crude. If the force of the Delhi Sultan was more efficient than that of the indigenous princes, it was not due to its superior organisation or training, but to its unexampled religious solidarity, sense of a common brotherhood and, above all, its unity, being stranger in a new and foreign country.

Financial administration

The income of the Sultanate of Delhi was derived from the five main sources sanctioned by the *shariat*. They were : (1) *Kharaj*, (2) *Ushr*, (3) *Jizya*, or poll tax, (4) *Khams*, and (5) *Zakat*. Besides, there were a few other taxes, such as, income from mines and treasure-trove, heirless property and customs and excise duties. *Kharaj* was a land tax realised from Hindu chiefs and peasantry. The ratio of the state demand to the gross produce of the soil was not constant. In fact, it seems that the *kharaj* was calculated on guess work or on the basis of old revenue records of the Hindu times. The *ushr*, too, was a land tax. It was charged on land held by a Muslim and watered by natural means. Usually it was one-tenth of the produce, and that is why it is called *ushr*. Some modification in the land tax from Muslim cultivators had to be made, for when a large number of non-muslims were converted to Islam it was found unprofitable to retain the old rate, that is, one-tenth of the produce. The *jizya* was a tax on *zimmis* or non-Muslims. For purposes of this tax the entire Hindu population was divided into three grades or classes. The first grade paid at the rate of forty-eight *dirhams*, the second at twenty-four and the third at twelve *dirhams* for each soul living. Women, children, hermits and beggars were exempt from

this tax. *Khams* was one-fifth of the booty captured in war from the infidels. Four-fifth went to the army. The *zakat* was a tax on Muslims. It was one-fortieth of their income and it had to be spent on specified items for the benefit of Muslims only, such as repair of mosques, defraying the cost of religious endowments and the pension to the *ulema* and on other religious and charitable purposes. The customs duty was on goods that came from outside. Its rate was 2½ per cent in case of Muslims and 5 per cent in that of non-Muslim merchants. There were a number of transit duties and tolls charged on ferries, roads, bridges, etc. According to the *shariat*, the ruler was entitled to all the underground treasures and mines.

These sources brought in a huge annual income to the Sultan. The most profitable source of income seems to have been the Sultan's share of the booty which brought in lakhs of rupees worth of spoils from Hindu territories. We have no means of ascertaining even the probable income of the Sultanate during this period. It must, however, have been a very considerable sum indeed, for we hear of accumulation of huge wealth from reign to reign.

There was no privy purse for the Sultan those days. The entire income of the State belonged to him in practice, though not in theory and he could use it for the benefit of the State or spend it on his household and personal requirements.

Administration of justice

The Sultan was the fountain-head of justice. He had not only to provide for an equitable administration of justice but was also required to hear and decide cases himself. Thus the Sultan was the highest court of appeal in the country. But sometimes he decided cases in the first instance also. In cases arising out of religious disputes he was assisted by the chief *sadr* and the *mufti*, while in other cases he sat with the chief *qazi*. The next highest judicial authority in the Sultanate was the chief qazi who was appointed by the Sultan. The historian, Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, held this office for a long time. He lived at the capital and decided cases. The chief qazi was also the *sadr* of the kingdom and was called *sadr-i-jahan* in that capacity. In his capacity as the chief qazi he supervised and controlled the lower judges in the provinces and heard appeals coming from their courts.

There were qazis in the provinces and also in important cities. They were appointed by the chief qazi. There was another officer

known as *dad-i-bak* or *amir-i-dad*. His office corresponded to that of the modern city magistrate. The cases in which Hindus alone were involved were generally decided by their *panchayats*, but those cases in which Muslims and Hindus were parties were decided by the qazis. The *kotwal* was the head of the police department in the towns. Besides being the police officer, he was also a committing magistrate. Criminal law was very severe. Torture and mutilation were common punishments. The so-called Slave kings followed the policy of minimum interference with the lives of the people of rural areas. The State made no arrangements for administering justice in the villages where the people had their own courts or *panchayats*.

Society and culture

The ruling class was composed of Turks belonging to various tribes. There were other foreigners besides them, such as, the Persians, the Afghans and the Arabs. The Turks suffered from superiority complex. They believed in the theory of racial purity and racial superiority and did not associate the Indian Muslims, whose number was growing, with the administration of their kingdom. But, inspite of this complex, there was a considerable mixing of the different races with the result that the Muslim population in Hindustan in the thirteenth century was becoming hybrid. Inter-marriages with the native Muslims and refugees from Central Asia and also Mongols, newly converted to Islam, became common and brought about a fusion of the various races of Muslims in the land.

Broadly speaking, the Muslim society of the thirteenth century was divided into two classes, namely, the men of the sword and the men of the pen. The Turks belonged to the former category, while the theologians and literary men, who were mostly non-Turks, formed the latter group. They provided to the state the class of teachers and preachers. The Muslim aristocracy was predominantly of Turkish blood. It was a hierarchy with a series of ascending ranks at the top of which were *amirs*, *maliks* and *khans*. The highest title was *Ulugh Khan* and there was only one *Ulugh Khan* at a time. Slaves were gradually promoted and could become amirs and maliks. None of them, except Balban, was promoted to the rank of Khan. The Muslim society was mainly urban. It must have included, besides soldiers and administrators, traders, artisans, shopkeepers, clerks and beggars. An influential class was that of the slaves, most of whom had been born of non-Muslim parents, but had been sold as slaves,

converted to Islam and brought up in the houses of their Muslim masters. The Muslim population was predominantly Sunni. Shias mostly belonged to Multan and Sindh. Quite a large number of the latter class lived in Delhi and other cities in the Turkish dominion. There was no sympathy between the followers of the two sects. In fact, the Shias were hated by the Sunnis who were in power. The Shias made more than one attempt during our period to capture power, but were ruthlessly punished. There was a third religious group the members of which were known as *Sufis*. They were Muslim mystics who were men of learning and believed in direct communion with God. They practised piety and poverty and lived far away from the society of the townsmen. The *sufi* saints had many followers whom they initiated into *sufi* practices. They had two important orders among them, namely, the Chishtia order and the Suhrawardia order, founded, respectively, by Muin-ud-din Chishti at Ajmer and Bha-ud-din Zakariya at Multan. These two saints had many disciples who were instrumental in gaining a large number of willing converts to Islam.

The vast majority of the population was, of course, Hindu. As has been said before, a Hindu was called *zimmi* or a protected person and was required to pay a special tax called *jizya*. He suffered from many disabilities and was not accorded rights of full citizenship. His existence and that of his religion were tolerated as evils.[1] A considerable number of the Hindus were masters of the land and were fairly well-to-do. There is evidence to believe that some of the Hindu merchants and bankers advanced loans to the Muslim nobles. They did not, however, exercise any influence on the politics of the day except indirectly, as they could not be easily repressed and weeded out. Much of the business, industry and commerce were in their hands. Most of them were cultivators. Most of the Hindus lived in villages and hardly came into touch with the ruling minority.

During this period the contact between Hinduism and Islam had begun to exert some influence on the followers of the two creeds. The Hindu convert to Islam naturally retained some of his Hindu habits and mode of life. He readily took to the practice of worshipping saints and shrines, as he was accustomed, while Hindu, to the worship of local and tribal deities. *Sufism* provided a common ground

[1] For the status of non-Muslims in an Islamic state, see Sir Jadunath Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. III, pp. 251-57 and 263-64.

to the followers of the two creeds. Among the intellectuals of the two creeds, however, there was not much of cultural or religious contact.

Some of the Turkish rulers were patrons of learning and gathered around themselves theologians, historians, and men of letters in general. Balban particularly had many a literary light at his court. The greatest among the literary lights of the period were Amir Khusrav and Amir Hasan of Delhi both of whom wrote in Persian and whose works were read even outside India. We are told that many valuable works of history, theology and fiction were produced in the thirteenth century. There was some arrangement also for the education of children. In every Muslim colony there were two educational institutions. They were the *maktab*, that is, the primary school attached to the mosque and the *madrsah* or a seat of higher learning. Some of the Sultans founded colleges at Delhi and other places and richly endowed them. Iltutmish is said to have built a college at Delhi and another at Multan. Generally two arts were practised. They were architecture and calligraphy. The Turks were fond of fine buildings and they imported Muslim architectural ideas and designs from Central Asia. We have already seen that Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish and Balban built several notable edifices, particularly mosques. Though taboo for the orthodox, music could not have altogether been neglected. Some of the modern Muslim writers describe the Sultanate of Delhi as a culture state. This, however, is a tall claim. If some of the rulers were fond of literature, they were also ferocious tyrants for the vast majority of their subjects; and if there was any real culture, it was confined to the court and the capital. The cultural activity was that of the classes and not of the masses. The Sultanate of Delhi was, in fact, a military state. It held the country by means of powerful military garrisons established at various strategic places. It concerned itself with two duties only, namely, the maintenance of law and order and the collection of revenue. It did not care for the cultural, moral, physical and even material welfare of the people. Such a state could not deserve the designation of a culture state. Inspite of its duration of about eighty-five years, it was definitely a foreign State on the Indian soil.

9

KHALJI IMPERIALISM

JALAL-UD-DIN FIROZ KHALJI, 1290-1296

Early career

Malik Firoz was a Turk of the Khalji tribe. His ancestors, after having migrated from Turkistan, had lived for over 200 years in the Helmand valley and Lamghan, parts of Afghanistan called *Garmasir* or the hot region, and had adopted some Afghan manners and customs. They were, therefore, wrongly looked upon as Afghans by the Turkish nobles in India. Firoz's family had migrated to our country and taken up service under the Turkish Sultans of Delhi. Firoz had risen to the important position of *sar-i-jandar*, that is, the head of the royal bodyguard, and was, subsequently, appointed governor of Samana. He was a very able soldier and, as a governor of the frontier province of Samana, had fought a number of engagements against the Mongol invaders and repelled them. He had thus acquired reputation as a successful soldier and administrator. He was, consequently, given the title of Shaista Khan. On the death of Malik Tuzaki he was promoted to the high office of army minister by Kaiqubad. Besides being a minister at the court of Delhi, Firoz was also the head of the large Khalji clan whose members were scattered all over Hindustan. A section of this tribe had ruled Bangal since the time of Ikhtiyar-ud-din bin Bakhtiyar Khalji. At the time of his promotion to ministership, he was probably the most experienced and powerful Turkish nobleman in Delhi.

His accession

It has already been related that there was little sympathy between the new army minister, Malik Firoz, and the orthodox Turkish party at the court headed by Malik Aitemar (Kachhan) and Malik Surkha, who held the important posts of *amir-i-hajib* and *barbak* and, as such, wielded supreme power at Delhi. These two Turkish nobles planned to get rid of Firoz and all other non-Turkish officers in order to re-assert the Turkish monopoly of power. This led to a

conflict between the parties, from which Firoz emerged victorious. Kachhan was put to death, his partisans were terrorised and Malik Firoz set himself up as a regent of the infant king, Kayumars. The next step was to put both Kaiqubad and Kayumars to death and seize power. This accomplished, Firoz ascended the throne at Kilokhari, the palace built by Kaiqubad, in March 1290, and assumed the title of Sultan Jalal-ud-din Firoz.

His unpopularity

The new king was an old man of seventy years. Inspite of having enjoyed the reputation of a seasoned and successful general who had guarded the north-western frontier of the kingdom throughout Kaiqubad's reign, Jalal-ud-din was very unpopular among the nobles and the people of Delhi. The main cause of his unpopularity with the proud Turks was the erroneous belief that the Khaljis were non-Turks and hence not entitled to share power with the Turks. For about eighty-four years the *Ilbari* Turks had occupied the throne of Delhi and, in their eyes, and also in those of the people, it was improper that the crown should have gone to one who did not belong to this race. Thirdly, Jalal-ud-din Firoz was an old man and had, therefore, some peculiarities due to age. He was, moreover, known to be very mild and generous and did not possess that dignity and grace which were supposed to be indispensable in a monarch. Fourthly, if not Firoz himself, at least his followers, particularly the young Khaljis, were known to be highly ambitious. They were, therefore, looked at with suspicion. For these reasons the new reign was unpopular, and Firoz dared not crown himself in Balban's palace at Delhi. He chose the unfinished palace of Kaiqubad at Kilokhari for the coronation ceremony. He lived there for about a year and instructed his courtiers and followers to build for themselves houses around the palace. He completed Kaiqubad's unfinished palace. Within a short time Kilokhari became an important town in the vicinity of Delhi. Firoz was not only unpopular with the old nobility but some of his own followers, specially the more vigorous and restless among them, did not like his generosity and weakness. The old Sultan followed the policy of minimum interference with the administrative arrangements and allowed older officers to remain in possession of their posts and emoluments. Young Khalji warriors who were looking forward to be appointed to top-ranking positions carrying power, prestige and remuneration, felt disgusted. Some of them

charged him with senility and dotage, pronounced him unfit for the throne and wanted to remove him and elevate one of their own number to the throne. His own nephew and son-in-law, Ala-ud-din, became the leader of this disgruntled party.

Domestic policy

Firoz's policy was not to bring about any radical change in the administrative personnel of his government. He confirmed the Turkish nobles in the offices that they had held during the last reign. Malik Chhajju, the nephew of Balban and the sole survivor of the latter's family, was allowed to retain the governorship of Kara Manikpur. Malik Fakhr-ud-din was confirmed as the kotwal of Delhi. He elevated his own sons to high rank. The eldest, Mahmud, was given the title of Khan-i-Khan. The second became Arkali Khan and the third was entitled Qadr Khan. The Sultan's younger brother was ennobled as Yaghrus Khan and was appointed army minister, that is, *ariz-i-mamalik*. Both his nephews, Ala-ud-din and Almas Beg, were similarly rewarded, and Malik Ahmad Chap, a near relative, was appointed *amir-i-hajib*, that is, master of ceremonies.

Firoz's internal policy was one of conciliation. He tried to be peaceful, merciful and humane and wanted to rule, if possible, without bloodshed. He was anxious not to come into clash with the old nobility or with the citizens of Delhi. That was why he did not take up his residence in the old city for about a year. When, however, he accepted the invitation of the citizens of the capital, headed by kotwal Fakhr-ud-din, he dismounted in front of Balban's Red Palace and wept before entering the throne-room. He did not take his seat on the throne as he had stood many a time, he said, before it when he was a mere noble and courtier.

Malik Chhajju raised the standard of revolt at Kara Manikpur in the second year of Firoz's reign. He assumed the title of Sultan and was joined by Hatim Khan, governor of Awadh. Their united armies proceeded against Delhi. Firoz marched out to meet them. An advance guard of his army under his son, Arkali Khan, encountered the rebels near Badaun and defeated them. Malik Chhajju was taken prisoner and was brought before the Sultan who wept at the high-born prisoner in fetters. He ordered Malik Chhajju and his followers to be released and then entertained them at a wine party. He openly praised Chhajju's followers for their loyalty to the only heir of their deceased master, Balban. The young Khalji

officers, headed by the outspoken Ahmad Chap, protested against this kind of silly talk which, he rightly said, was an incitement to rebellion. Firoz replied that he did not like to kill a single Muslim for the sake of a transitory kingdom. Malik Chhajju was delivered to the custody of Arkali Khan who was appointed to the government of Multan. Kara Manikpur was now given to Ala-ud-din, the Sultan's nephew.

Firoz sometimes carried his policy of leniency to excess. A number of *thags* or robbers were arrested at Delhi. One of these furnished information which led to the arrest of a thousand people belonging to this fraternity. Firoz, however, did not inflict any punishment on this gang. He embarked them in boats and sent them by water to Bangal where they were set free at his orders. There is, however, one instance on record of Firoz's departure from his policy of leniency. A religious leader, named Sidi Maula, who was a disciple of Shaikh Farid-ud-din Ganj-i-Shakar of Pak-Pattan (Ajudhan), was believed to have been an aspirant for the throne. He had a large number of followers whom he used to entertain in a most lavish manner. There was a plot to marry a daughter of the late Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud to Sidi Maula and then to raise him to the throne. Some of the nobles of Firoz's court became privy to the conspiracy. The Sultan had, therefore, Sidi Maula and his chief disciples arrested and brought before him. He lost temper in a controversy with the Maula and had him murdered in his presence. A fanatic Muslim, who was opposed to this sect, slashed Sidi Maula several times with a razor and stabbed him with a packing needle. His body was trampled under foot by an elephant. The death of the saint was followed by a dust-storm and a severe famine caused by the failure of seasonal rains. It was superstitiously believed by the people that these were due to the curse of the deceased saint on the Sultan. The famine, in fact, was so severe that the price of grain rose to one *jital* per seer and a large number of people drowned themselves in the Yamuna.

Foreign policy

Firoz Khalji did not indulge in aggressive warfare. He conducted only two expeditions, none of which proved to be very successful. The first expedition was directed against Ranthambhor, led by the Sultan in person in 1290. The Chauhan ruler of the

fortress of Ranthambhor offered a stout resistance. Firoz, finding himself unequal to the task, gave up the campaign and returned to Delhi. He comforted himself with the argument that he valued each hair of a Muslim's head more than a hundred such fortresses as Ranthambhor. The only advantage that the king gained in the campaign was the occupation of the district of Jhain, where he destroyed the temples and broke the images to pieces. The next expedition was undertaken against Mandawar which had once belonged to Delhi, but had been recovered by the Rajputs. It was recaptured in 1292.

Two more expeditions were undertaken during his reign—not by the Sultan, but by his nephew, Ala-ud-din, who, in 1292, invaded Malwa and captured the town of Bhilsa which was probably allowed to remain in native hands. At this place he acquired a huge plunder. Here he heard stories of the great southern kingdom of Devagiri and its fabulous wealth, and his imagination was fired by the ambition of conquering southern India. On return, Ala-ud-din was promoted to the governorship of Awadh in addition to that of Kara. Ala-ud-din's next expedition was undertaken in 1294 against the king of Devagiri, Rama Chandra Deva, whom he defeated. He brought from Devagiri a huge booty amounting to many thousand pounds of gold, pearls, gems and silver and one thousand pieces of silk cloth.

The 'New Muslims'

The kingdom of Delhi was disturbed in Firoz's reign by a Mongol invasion. A huge Mongol army, said to be one lakh fifty thousand strong, under the command of a grandson of Hulagu, invaded the Panjab in 1292 and advanced as far as the town of Sunam. Sultan Firoz showed great activity and marched quickly to encounter the invader on whom he inflicted a severe defeat. The Mongols made peace. Their army was permitted to retreat peacefully. One of the descendants of Changiz Khan, named Ulugh, entered Firoz's service, embraced Islam and settled down in Delhi. Firoz gave a daughter in marriage to him. He and his followers became known as the 'New Muslims'.

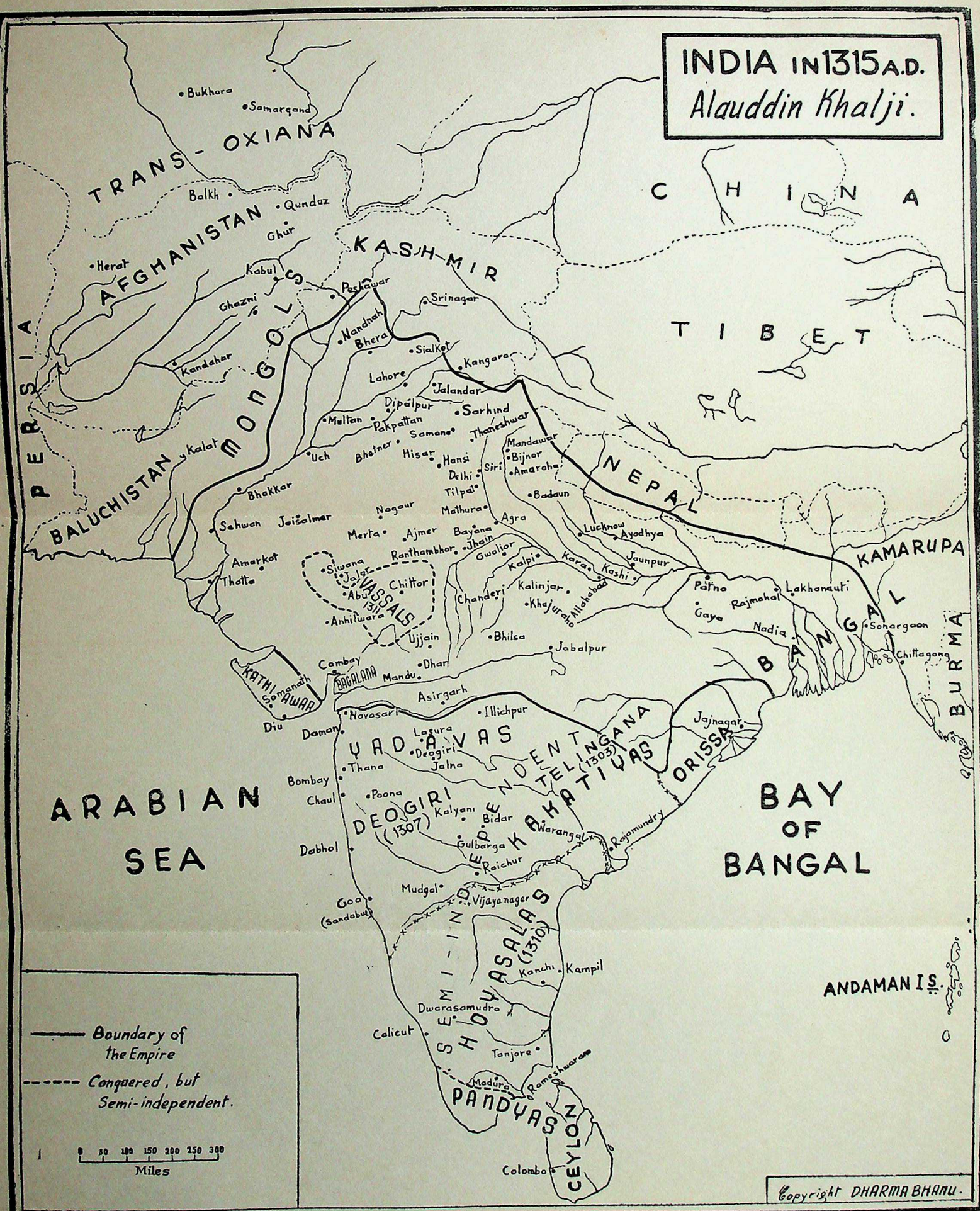
The death of Jalal-ud-din

During the absence of Ala-ud-din from Kara some of the officers of the Sultan tried to convince the latter that Ala-ud-din was an extremely ambitious youth and had his eye on the throne; he should-

therefore, be suppressed in time. The Sultan, whose credulity was encouraged by the smooth words of Ulugh Khan, Ala-ud-din's brother, declared that there was no reason why Ala-ud-din should be inordinately ambitious when he loved him as a son and was prepared to do everything for him. Ulugh Khan persuaded the Sultan to believe that Ala-ud-din was anxious to present the immense wealth that he had brought from Devagiri, but he was afraid of coming to Delhi and waiting on the Sultan as the Devagiri expedition had been undertaken without the royal permission. Jalal-ud-din disregarded the protests of his officers and decided to proceed to Kara to meet his nephew and son-in-law. He set out from Delhi and travelled by boat, while his army proceeded by land under the command of Ahmad Chap. Ala-ud-din crossed the Ganga to Manikpur and, keeping his army in readiness, sent his brother to lure the Sultan into the trap so cleverly laid for him. Ulugh Khan waited on the Sultan and requested him not to permit his army to cross to the eastern bank of the river, as Ala-ud-din was still full of apprehension and might commit suicide or take refuge by flight. Objections were raised by the courtiers that Ala-ud-din had not come in person to wait on the Sultan and that his army was drawn in battle array. Ulugh Khan replied that he was busy in preparing a feast and making arrangements for the presentation of the spoils from Devagiri and that his troops were drawn up in order to accord a befitting reception to the Sultan. Jalal-ud-din was satisfied by the explanation and proceeded to meet his nephew, followed by a few unarmed attendants. Ala-ud-din now advanced and bowed low before the Sultan. Jalal-ud-din affectionately raised him up and embraced him and then, taking him by the hand, led him towards the boat, sweetly talking with him on the way. Ala-ud-din now gave a signal to one of his followers, named Muhammad Salim, who aimed two sword blows at the Sultan. Jalal-ud-din was wounded and attempted to flee towards the boat crying "Ala-ud-din, wretch ! What have you done ?" Meanwhile another of Ala-ud-din's followers, coming up from behind, severed the Sultan's head from his body. The followers of the Sultan were put to death. Ala-ud-din raised the royal umbrella over his head and proclaimed himself king on 19th July, 1296. Jalal-ud-din's head was placed on a spear and paraded through the two provinces, Kara Manikpur and Awadh, then in the charge of Ala-ud-din.

Estimate of Jalal-ud-din Firoz

Jalal-ud-din was the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi who placed before him the ideal of benevolent despotism. Though a successful general with powerful army at his back, he gave up the policy of militarism which had been the motive force of his predecessors for about a century. He was very anxious to reconcile the hostile elements in the court and the kingdom by means of a generous policy. He allowed important Turkish officers, who were the followers of Balban's dynasty, to remain in places of power. He showed studied modesty almost to the extent of self-effacement. As has been said, the Sultan did not ride in the courtyard of Balban's palace and refused to sit upon the old throne because he had stood before it as a servant and had a new throne made for himself. It is too much to believe that a lifelong soldier and general like him possessed such natural modesty. Obviously, it was policy. Jalal-ud-din did not undertake any notable military expedition against the Hindu chiefs. Probably he thought that the interests of the State demanded consolidation. During the three years of the rule of Kaiqubad and Kayumars, the administration of Delhi had been thrown out of the gear. It required concentrated attention The charge of pusillanimity does not hold water, for he successfully defended the north-western frontier of the Sultanate and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Mongols who had, therefore, to make peace and settle down in Delhi as peaceful citizens. His rule was not in any way remarkable; but it must be admitted that for the first time in the history of the Sultanate of Delhi there was a king who made some attempt at conciliating public opinion and reconciling the various elements of power among the Muslim population, Turkish, non-Turkish and Indian. Some historians are of opinion that owing to his policy of unbecoming leniency the State would have come to harm if his reign had been prolonged. They have, consequently, come to the conclusion that he was unfit to hold the sceptre in that age. This view seems to be erroneous, for Jalal-ud-din was not all kindness. He was as intolerant towards the religion of the vast majority of the people as his predecessors. He destroyed and desecrated temples and broke images at Jhain, as has already been shown. He could put even a Muslim saint to death, if he believed it to be desirable in the interest of the State. It is unfortunate that Barani picked up only those events of his reign which show him in bad light. That historian,


INDIA IN 1315 A.D.
Alauddin Khalji.
TRANS-OXIANA
AFGHANISTAN
PERSIA
BALUCHISTAN
MONGOLS
KASHMIR
CHINA
TIBET
NEPAL
KAMARUPA
BENGAL
BURMA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
ORISSA
ANDAMAN IS.
CEYLON
Bukhara
Samarqand
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Peshawar
Srinagar
Nandnah
Bhera
SialKot
Kangara
Lahore
Jalandar
Dipalpur
Sarhind
Multan
Pakpattan
Samana
Thaneshwar
Uch
Bhatner
Hisar
Hansi
Siri
Delhi
Tilpat
Mandawar
Bijnor
Amaroha
Badaun
Bhakkar
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Mathura
Agra
Merta
Ajmer
Bayana
Jhain
Gwalior
Lucknow
Ayodhya
Jaunpur
Kara
Kashi
Kalpi
Ranthambhor
Amarkot
Thatta
Siwana
Jalor
Abu
Chittor
VASSALS
1311
Anhilwara
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Khajuraho
Allahabad
Patna
Rajmahal
Lakhanauti
Gaya
Nadia
Sonargaon
Chittagong
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Jabalpur
Cambay
Dhar
Mandu
KATHI AWAR
Somanath
BAGLANA
Asirgarh
Navasari
Illichpur
Diu
Daman
Lasura
Deogiri
Jalna
YADAVAS
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Poona
DEOGIRI
(1307)
Kalyani
Bidar
Gulbarga
Dabhol
Raichur
Mudgal
Goa
(Sandabur)
Vijayanagar
SEMI-INDEPENDENT
HOYASALAS
(1310)
Kanchi
Kampil
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
Tanjore
Madura
Rameshwaram
PANDYAS
Colombo
KAKATIYAS
Warangal
Rajamundry
TELINGANA
(1303)
Jajnagar
Boundary of the Empire
Conquered, but Semi-independent.
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Miles
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who is the sole authority on his reign, was biased against Jalal-ud-din and, in fact, against all Khaljis. The truth seems to be that he was not over-mild, but was anxious to keep a balance between the contending parties. A moderate ruler is generally disliked by various parties by reason of his modesty and impartiality. Barring a few instances, such as the one of letting off the thieves by taking a promise from them not to commit theft again, the history of his reign shows that Jalal-ud-din knew when it was necessary to be firm and when not.

ALA-UD-DIN KHALJI, 1296-1316

Early career

Ala-ud-din was a nephew and son-in-law of Jalal-ud-din Firoz. He was a very active and spirited soldier and was gifted with a fund of commonsense and realism. He was known to be ambitious and must have given early promise of future greatness. On his uncle's accession, in 1290, he was promoted to the office of *amir-i-tuzak* and was, shortly after, appointed governor of Kara Manikpur, near Allahabad. The followers of Malik Chhajju flocked round him. Young Khalji soldiers, too, who were ambitious of rising to power and wealth, recognised him as the man of the hour who could be persuaded to strike for the throne of Delhi and occupy it and reward them for their valour and enthusiasm. These disgruntled men, being dissatisfied with the lenient policy of the aged king, Jalal-ud-din, spurred Ala-ud-din on to fight for the throne. But Ala-ud-din was shrewd enough not to precipitate action. He waited to strike only at a favourable opportunity. His first and more urgent work was that of increasing his followers and of gathering round him men of tried ability and sure loyalty. He kept his uncle and sovereign in good humour through his brother, who served as his representative at the court and looked after his interests there. He obtained the Sultan's permission to lead an expedition to Malwa. In 1292 he penetrated into the heart of Malwa, captured the town of Bhilsa and brought a huge sum of money and valuable articles as plunder. He sent a part of these to the Sultan who rewarded him with governorship of Awadh in addition to that of Kara. Ala-ud-din, thus, ruled over two provinces of his uncle's kingdom.

His recent success in Malwa whetted Ala-ud-din's appetite for further conquests. At Bhilsa he had heard stories of the pros-

perity of the southern kingdom of Devagiri and his imagination was fired by dreams of conquest of southern India. He obtained his uncle's permission to increase the number of his troops, but concealed from him his project of a Dakhin campaign. Immediately south of the Vindhya mountains there were, at this time, two flourishing kingdoms in the Dakhin, the kingdom of Devagiri in the west and that of Telingana in the east. Ala-ud-din resolved to raid the former. He made preparations for the enterprise and, placing Malik Ala-ul-mulk, his deputy, in Kara, he proceeded on the enterprise in 1294 with an army consisting of eight thousand horse. He cunningly gave out on the way that he was a refugee noble from Delhi going to seek shelter and service at Rajamundry in southern Telingana. In view of this, he was not suspected or opposed by any one on the way. He appeared all of a sudden on the northern frontier of Devagiri which was ruled by the Yadava king, Rama Chandra Deva. The Yadava ruler was taken by surprise. A greater part of his army was away from his kingdom under his son, Shankar Deva, who had gone on a pilgrimage. Rama Chandra hastily collected 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers and met the invader at Lasura, twelve miles from Devagiri. But he was defeated by Ala-ud-din's vastly superior army and compelled to take shelter within his fort. Ala-ud-din besieged the fort and gave out that his troops were only an advance guard of a big army of 20,000 horse who were coming from Delhi to join him. Rama Chandra was frightened by the news and agreed to make peace. He made over to the invader 1,400 pounds of gold, a large quantity of precious pearls and other things. Ala-ud-din was preparing to depart when the Raja's son, Shankar Deva, returned from the pilgrimage and, contrary to his father's advice, attacked the invader. Ala-ud-din divided his army into two parts. One was left to watch the city and prevent Rama Chandra from coming to the assistance of his son, while with the other he prepared to fight Shankar. He was on the point of being defeated when the second part of his army under Malik Nasrat moved from the border of the city to his assistance. Shankar thought that this was the army from Delhi about which Ala-ud-din had boasted. His nerves were, therefore, shaken and he suffered a defeat. Ala-ud-din once again besieged the fort of Devagiri. After a few days' fighting Rama Chandra discovered that the sacks with which he had provisioned the garrison contained salt instead of grain. He was compelled to

sue for peace. Ala-ud-din now imposed much harsher terms than before. He compelled Rama Chandra to cede to him the province of Illichpur and to pay him a very huge indemnity which consisted of "17,250 pounds of gold, 200 pounds of pearls, 58 pounds of other gems, 28,250 pounds of silver and 1,000 pieces of silk cloth." With this enormous booty he returned to Kara.

This was the first Turkish expedition to southern India. Ala-ud-din's success was well-deserved. His objective was separated from his base by several hundred miles and the entire region was unknown and the people were hostile to him. The successful expedition showed that Ala-ud-din was not only gifted with soldierly talent of a high order, but was also a man of great daring and dash, of organising ability and resourcefulness.

This remarkable success turned Ala-ud-din's head. He now aspired for the throne of Delhi. His followers had been egging him on to action. His domestic difficulties were also pointing the same way. His wife, who was a daughter of the Sultan, was on bad terms with him. She and her mother, the queen, intrigued against him at court and also embittered his private life. These domestic reasons prompted him to come to a decision in the matter as early as possible. As has already been related, he decoyed his uncle and had him murdered near Kara Manikpur on July 19, 1296, and crowned himself king.

His early difficulties

Ala-ud-din literally waded through blood to the throne of Delhi. He had expected it to be a bed of roses; but at least for some time, it actually proved to be one of thorns. He found himself surrounded by difficulties. He was a usurper and guilty of the murder of his uncle and his greatest benefactor on earth. For this reason he became the object of hatred for all decent and right-thinking people. Then, there were the nobles and followers of the late Sultan (called Jalali nobles) who were not expected to forgive the murderer of their patron. The most redoubtable supporter of the legitimists was the brave Ahmad Chap, who was one of the most fearless living soldiers in the Turkish dominion. Thirdly, Delhi was far off and the sovereignty of Hindustan was supposed to belong to the occupant of the throne in that capital city. The widowed queen, Malka-i-Jahan, thinking it to be dangerous to keep the throne vacant, made hasty arrangements to fill it by raising her second son,

Qadr Khan, to it and proclaiming him as Sultan under the title of Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim. If properly supported, the new king, Ibrahim, was likely to be a formidable rival to Ala-ud-din. Besides, there were powerful Hindu chiefs who chafed under the Turkish yoke and were waiting for an opportunity to get rid of it. Finally, the Mongols were hammering at the north-western gates of the Sultanate of Delhi. The situation, therefore, looked formidable and would have quelled a heart less stout than that of Ala-ud-din.

Occupation of Delhi

Ala-ud-din faced the manifold difficulties with a vigour and determination that recalled the early activity of Iltutmish. His initial hesitation and desire to retire into Bangal was given up in favour of a bold policy of striking at Delhi without loss of time. His resolution was strengthened by the welcome news that there was a rift among the supporters of the legitimists. Arkali Khan, the eldest living son of Jalal-ud-din, took objection to the elevation of his younger brother to the throne, refused to recognise him and sulked at Multan. Many of the partisans of Jalal-ud-din went to join him there. Encouraged by this division, Ala-ud-din proceeded towards Delhi, conciliating the public on the way by distributing the Dakhin money among them. His army swelled up to a gigantic figure. On the news of his approach, Ibrahim issued out of Delhi and an encounter took place between the two rivals at Badaun. Ala-ud-din got the better of his opponent without fighting. Most of Ibrahim's troops and followers deserted him to join Ala-ud-din who was able to proceed to Delhi at the head of sixty thousand horse and sixty thousand foot. Ibrahim fled towards Multan with his mother and followers. Ala-ud-din entered the capital and was formally crowned in the Red Palace of Balban on October 3, 1296.

The first act of the new sovereign was to conciliate the people so as to make them forget the heinous crime of which he had been guilty. He lavishly distributed the cash spoils from Devagiri. It is said that on his way from Kara Manikpur to Delhi he set up a *balista* before his tent at every halting place from which small gold and silver coins were scattered among the public. He continued this practice at Delhi for some days. People's memory is proverbially short; they forgot Ala-ud-din's treachery and ingratitude and most people began to talk of his lavish generosity. Almost all the important nobles and officers joined him and forgot the past. His

second act was to put down Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim and his supporters with the assistance of the new army of adventurers who had been drawn to him by lavish distribution of gold. An army, forty thousand strong, under Ulugh Khan and Hijabr-ud-din, was sent to Multan to dispose of Arkali Khan, Ibrahim and their mother. The city was captured without resistance and the princes were taken prisoners. Arkali, Ibrahim and Ahmad Chap were blinded and so also Ulugh Khan, the Mongol, who was a son-in-law of Jalal-ud-din. Malka-i-Jahan, the widowed queen, was thrown into prison. By a clever and tactful policy the new Sultan disposed of his rivals and their supporters and was firmly seated upon the throne.

The Sultan's success made it possible for him to punish those of the prominent nobles and officers who had deserted Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim and joined him for love of money. Ala-ud-din believed that such people who could desert one master and join another were not dependable men and as such, deserved punishment. Accordingly, he put some of them to death, blinded some others and imprisoned the rest of them. Their wives and children were deprived of all their property and reduced to beggary. Ala-ud-din made it a rule to profit by treachery and then to punish it.

His theory of kingship

As soon as he had established himself firmly, Ala-ud-din decided to revive Balban's theory of kingship. Like Balban, he believed in the majesty of the monarch and in his being God's representative on earth. He had the firm conviction that greater wisdom was given to the Sultan than to any other human being and that his will should be the law. He believed in the maxim that 'kingship knows no kingship' and that all the inhabitants of the country must be either his servants or his subjects. He decided that he would not be influenced by any individual or party in laying down his policy for the State. Throughout the thirteenth century two powerful groups had exercised influence on the Sultan of Delhi. The one was the nobility and the other was the order of the *ulema*. Ala-ud-din was not prepared to suffer the old aristocracy to set itself as a power in the State. He would not like them to influence his policy. He wanted to reduce them to the position of mere servants who could be appointed and dismissed by the Sultan at will. He inspired so much awe that no courtier had the courage to give him advice or to ask for any favour. The only man who could presume to advise

the king was his old friend, Ala-ul-mulk, the kotwal of Delhi. As regards the second group, namely that of the *ulema,* Ala-ud-din declared for the first time in the history of the Sultanate that he would not allow them to dictate to the Sultan in the administration of the State. He said that he knew much better than the religious divines to what was necessary and useful for the welfare of the state. He enunciated his policy in the following words : "I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; whatever I think to be for the good of the state or suitable for the emergency, that I decree; and as for what may happen to me on the Day of Judgment, that I know not." Thus to Ala-ud-din belongs the credit of being the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi to bring the Church under the control of the State and to usher in factors that might make the State secular in theory. Unfortunately, this policy was not followed up by his successors and the Turkish State in India, therefore, reverted to a theocracy soon after his death. Though he thus prevented the interference of the *ulema* in matters of administration, he did take advantage of Muslim fanaticism in his wars against the indigenous chiefs and people. In fact, he incited them to a high pitch of bigotry whenever he stood in need of the support of the Muslim public opinion or their military co-operation. Ala-ud-din did not cease to be a Musalman. He did not lose faith in the Muslim law and did not act against it. In fact, he remained as good a Musalman as any of his predecessors on the throne of Delhi.

Ala-ud-din did not think it necessary to invoke the sanction of the Khalifa's name for strengthening his claims to sovereignty. He did not apply for an investiture from the Khalifa. Yet he styled himself only as an assistant or a deputy of the Khalifa (*Yamin-ul-Khilafat Nasiri Amir-ul-Mumnin*). His object in doing this was not to pay homage to the Khalifa as to a political superior, but only to keep the tradition of theoretical Khilafat alive.

As regards the Hindus, Ala-ud-din does not seem to have looked upon himself as their king in the same sense as of the Muslims and responsible for their welfare. His policy, which was one of repressing them completely, was not due to a momentary vagary, but formed part of his settled ideology. He consulted the famous qazi Mughis-ud-din of Bayana about the position which the Hindus should be allowed to enjoy in his kingdom. The qazi replied : "The Hindus are designated in the Law as payers of tribute (*kharaj*

guzar) ; and when the revenue officer demands silver from them, they should, without question and with all humility and respect, tender gold. If the officer throws dirt into their mouths, they must, without reluctance, open their mouths wide to receive it. By these acts of degradation are shown the extreme obedience of the *zimmi*, the glorification of the true faith. God Himself orders them to be humiliated, (as He says, till they pay the *jizya*) with the hand and are humbled .... the Prophet has commanded us to slay them, plunder them and to make them captive .... no other authority except the great *Imam* (Abu Hanifa), whose faith we follow, has sanctioned the imposition of the *jizya* on the Hindus." According to all other theologians, the rule for the Hindus was "either death or Islam". Ala-ud-din heartily agreed with the qazi. He was happy that he had been following the above policy in regard to the overwhelmingly vast Hindu population in his dominions.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Suppression of rebellions; analysis of their causes

The early years of Ala-ud-din's reign were distracted by rebellions. The first rebellion was that of the Mongols who had settled in India since the time of Jalal-ud-din Firoz and were known as the New Muslims. In 1299 they had accompanied Nasrat Khan in his expedition to Gujarat. When, after the successful termination of the campaign, the army began its return march, the New Muslims, feeling discontented with the distribution of the booty, mutinied and became guilty of killing a nephew of Ala-ud-din and a brother of Nasrat Khan. Nasrat ordered an attack and slaughtered a considerable number of them. Some of them fled to Ranthambhor and took refuge with its ruler, Hamira Deva. Ala-ud-din avenged himself by putting the wives and children of the rebels, who were in Delhi, to death. The second rebellion was that of Akat Khan who was the son of the Sultan's brother. When the Sultan was proceeding to Ranthambhor he halted for some days at Tilapat to indulge in his favourite pastime of hunting. Seeing Ala-ud-din left all alone during the course of one of the hunting expeditions, Akat Khan ordered his troops to attack him. Ala-ud-din defended himself bravely until some soldiers of his escort came up. But Akat Khan, believing that the Sultan had been killed, returned to the army, announced his death and attempted to enter his *harem* to take

its possession. Meanwhile, the Sultan, who was saved by the timely assistance of his bodyguards, returned to his camp. Akat Khan along with his followers was put to death. This rebellion was followed by another, and of a more serious nature. Amir Umar and Mangu Khan, the two sons of his sister, raised the standard of revolt in Badaun and Awadh while the Sultan was busy in the siege of Ranthambhor; but they were defeated and imprisoned by the loyal governors of the provinces. A fourth rebellion occurred at the capital city of Delhi where Haji Maula, a disaffected officer, collected an army of ruffians and killed the kotwal, named Tamardi. He attempted to follow up his success by trying to lay hand on Ayaz, the kotwal of Siri. In this, however, he failed; but he placed a nominee of his own on the throne of Delhi and proceeded to capture power. The rebel was, however, defeated and killed by a loyal officer, named Malik Hamid-ud-din. These rebellions, occurring as they did, one after another, within the space of a few years, convinced the Sultan that there was something radically wrong in his system of administration. In consultation with his friends he made a close study of the existing state of affairs and came to the conclusion that the rebellions were due to four causes. These causes, according to Ala-ud-din, were : (1) the inefficiency of his spy system which kept the king ignorant of the doings of his officers and people; (2) the general practice of the use of wine which promoted fellowship and prompted people to indulge in rebellions and conspiracy; (3) social intercourse among the nobles and inter-marriages between them which gave them an opportunity to combine against the king; and (4) the excess of wealth in the possession of certain notable people which gave them leisure for idle thoughts and for indulging in plots and rebellions.

The ordinances

Having analysed the causes of rebellions, Ala-ud-din proceeded to prevent their recurrence. He issued four important ordinances. The first ordinance aimed at confiscation of all religious endowments and free grants of land. Many hundreds of families had been in enjoyment of free land to support themselves. Some of them held land from time immemorial. A class of idlers had, thus, come into existence which derived its subsistence without labour. Ala-ud-din's measure hit this class hard. They had to pay land tax for their holdings and tax collectors were required to extort from them as

much money as possible on any pretext that they liked. The Sultan's attack on private property yielded wholesome results from his point of view. We are told by Barani that gold was not to be seen except in the houses of great nobles or high officials or the topmost merchants. By a second ordinance the Sultan reorganised the espionage. An army of spies was created. News-writers and spies were placed in the houses of nobles and officers and in all offices, towns and even in important villages. They were required to report all occurrences fit for the Sultan's ear and likely to be useful. The result of this ordinance was that the gossip of nobles and officers and even of common people came to an end and they became filled with awe of the Sultan's wrath, for he knew not only their doings but even their designs and thoughts. The third ordinance prohibited the use of liquor and drug. The Sultan himself gave up wine and caused his wine vessels to be broken in a dramatic fashion before the gaze of the public. Wine was banished from Delhi and the suburbs of the city also were closely watched. The violators of the law were cruelly punished, but the people did not give up drinking. They resorted to smuggling. Some of them travelled twenty to twenty-five miles to satisfy their craving. Ala-ud-din ultimately realised that people could not be made sober by legislation and hence he relaxed the ordinance, permitted private manufacture and consumption of liquor; but its sale was prohibited, and so also wine parties were forbidden. By the fourth ordinance, Ala-ud-din ordered that nobles should not have social gatherings and that they should not inter-marry without his permission. This regulation was rigorously enforced. Social gatherings and friendly meetings of the nobles came to an end.

The Hindus reduced to poverty

Along with these four ordinances the Sultan devised special regulations to put down Hindus and prevent them from rebelling against his tyranny. He rigorously enhanced the land revenue, fixing it at one-half of the gross produce. Besides the land tax, he also imposed other burdens, such as, grazing tax on cattle, sheep and goats. Other taxes, such as, *jizya*, customs and excise taxes, were retained as before. The result was that the Hindus, who were mainly connected with land in one form or the other, were hit hard and reduced to extreme poverty. They were closely watched, and if any one of them made an attempt to

evade any of the taxes, he was severely punished. Hitherto the upper class of Hindu officers in the revenue department, such as, headmen, farmers of revenue and chaudharis, were leniently treated in matters of fixing the State demand of the land given to them and in that of collection of revenue. Ala-ud-din withdrew this concession and compelled the hereditary assessors and collectors of revenue to continue to work as before without any special remuneration. These regulations were very strictly enforced by the minister of finance, named Sharaf Qai, and the band of Muslim officers under him. The officers earned the hatred of the public for the rigour with which they enforced them. Writes Sir Woolseley Haig, "Hindus throughout the kingdom were reduced to one dead level of poverty and misery, or, if there were one class more to be pitied than another, it was that which had formerly enjoyed the most esteem, the hereditary assessors and collectors of the revenue." The contemporary historian, Zia-ud-din Barani, in summing up the effects of the measures observes: "the *chaudharis*, *khuts* and *muqaddams* were not able to ride on horse-back, to find weapons, get fine clothes, or to indulge in betel." Their wives were obliged, owing to poverty, to work as maid-servants in the houses of their Muslim neighbours.

Ala-ud-din made it an object of his policy to raise able men of low birth to eminence so that they might act as a counterpoise to the nobility and the clergy.

The standing army

In order to enforce the above regulations, to act upon the principles of his theory of kingship, to satisfy his ambition of conquest and to protect the country from the ever-recurring Mongol invasions, it was necessary for Ala-ud-din to have a powerful army. Royal despotism of the type that was Ala-ud-din's aim was impossible without a military force of a high order. With this object in view Ala-ud-din undertook the reform of the army. To him belongs the credit of being the first Sultan of Delhi to lay the foundation of a permanent standing army which was always kept in readiness for service at the capital. The army was directly recruited by the army minister (*ariz-i-mamalik*). It was paid in cash from the royal treasury. The pay of a trooper was 234 *tankas* a year, while one with an additional horse was paid 78 *tankas* more. The soldiers were supplied with horses, arms and other equipment at the expense of the State.

In order to do away with corruption and to prevent proxy at a military review or in the field of battle, Ala-ud-din instituted the practice of recording the descriptive roll (*huliya*) of individual soldiers in the army minister's register. To prevent the defrauding of the government by the substitution of a bad horse for a good one the branding of horses (*dagh* system) was introduced. These innovations were not altogether new. They had been known before in India and abroad. According to Farishta, the central army consisted of 4,75,000 cavalrymen. The strength of the infantry is not recorded by any contemporary writer, but it must have far exceeded the cavalry. The Sultan bestowed a great deal of personal attention on the organisation, equipment and discipline of his military establishment.

Control of the market

Such a huge army could not be permanently maintained without unduly straining the resources of the state. But an army of that size was an indispensable necessity, Ala-ud-din had not only to put down sedition and weed out rebellions, but he had also to fight the Mongols who were annually visiting our north-western frontier. He had, besides, the ambition of conquering the whole of India. He was, therefore, compelled to think of a device to cheapen the cost of the maintenance of his powerful military establishment. This he did by regulating the prices of grain, cloth and other necessaries of life and cheapening them so much that a soldier could live comfortably on a mere pittance. He fixed the prices of food-grains, cloth and other commodities far below the usual market rates. The State collected its revenue in kind from the *khalisah* lands and, if possible, also from the territory held by vassals and, thus, raised large stocks of grain. No one else was permitted to purchase grain from the tillers of the soil, except those merchants who were authorised by a permit to do so. All merchants in Delhi were required to register themselves in the office of the *shahana-i-mandi*. Advances were given to those merchants who did not possess enough capital of their own. The merchants had to sell all commodities at the fixed rates and no deviation was permitted. If a merchant failed to carry out the orders and sold a commodity underweight, the same amount of flesh was cut off from his body. All kinds of speculation and black marketing were rigorously put down. The officers of the Doab were required to furnish guarantee in writing that they would not permit anyone

to hoard grain. Similarly, merchants were not to hoard grain or other articles, but must sell them at demand. Notable persons, nobles, officers and other well-to-do people had to get permits from the office of the *shahana-i-mandi* before they could purchase costly articles from the market. These regulations were rigorously enforced by two officers who were called *diwan-i-riyasat* and *shahana-i-mandi* who were assisted by a judge called *sarai adl* and a host of subordinate officers. They performed their duties with strict honesty and regularity and punished everyone who was guilty of violating the regulations. The result of these measures was that corn, cloth and other things became very cheap. Price of other things, such as, horses, cattle, maid-servants and slaves fell considerably. Throughout the reign of Ala-ud-din the cost of living remained cheap and almost constant. Modern writers have bestowed lavish praise upon Ala-ud-din for the success of his economic policy. There is a difference of opinion as to whether the measures were enforced in all the territory under Ala-ud-din, or they were restricted to Delhi and its suburbs. The latter view seems to be correct. It was impossible to enforce the regulations in the whole of the country. Even so, Ala-ud-din deserves credit for successfully tackling this difficult problem. The lavish distribution of wealth from southern India had cheapened money and inflated prices. The inflation was largely restricted to Delhi and the surrounding areas. The Sultan's measures well attained the object he had at heart, that is, fighting inflation and reducing the cost of living.

The revenue policy

Ala-ud-din did not rest satisfied with the control of the market and cheapening the cost of living. He desired, at the same time, to augment his financial resources. Accordingly, he turned to the reform of his revenue department. His predecessors had not paid much attention to formulating a scientific revenue policy. They had contented themselves with the time-honoured system which they had inherited from the Hindu times. But Ála-ud-din was a bold administrative reformer. He not only wished to introduce vigour and efficiency in the administration, but also desired to make a fundamental change in order to tap the resources of the country and increase his revenue to the utmost limit. With this object in view, he introduced a series of new measures which transformed the revenue rules and regulations of the Sultanate of Delhi. His first measure was to con-

fiscate land held mostly by Muslim grantees and religious men as *milk* (proprietary rights given by the state), *inam* (free gift), *idrarat* (pensions) and *waqfs* (endowments). It is too much to believe that all such land was confiscated and annexed by the state. Most probably, most of the land of the above description was attached; but some assignees were left untouched, as we have undoubted evidence of their existence in the beginning of the next reign. His second measure was to withdraw all the privileges which the Hindu *muqaddams* (headmen), *khuts* (farmers of revenue) and *chaudha* (revenue collectors) had enjoyed for generations, as we have already seen. These three classes of revenue officers were paid their dues as before; but, like all others who were connected with the land, they had to pay the land, house and grazing taxes. Thus, neither the Muslims nor the Hindus were left with any special privilege in the matter of land revenue. His third measure was to increase the State demand to the highest point possible. He fixed the State's share at fifty per cent of the gross produce of the land.[1] Over and above this, he charged, as has been related already, house tax, grazing tax and export and import duties. The Hindus, of course, were required to pay the *jizya* in addition. His fourth regulation was the introduction of the measurement of land with a view to ascertain the amount of land in the possession of each cultivator and the actual produce thereof. Although measurement of land was the usual feature of the revenue administration during the Hindu times and must have continued in some of the indigenous principalities, it was not adopted by any of the predecessors of Ala-ud-din. The credit of reviving it goes to this notable Khalji ruler who also made arrangement for ascertaining from the *patwari's* records the amount of arable land and revenue from each village in this dominions as a preliminary to his land settlements (*bandobast*). He employed honest and competent revenue officers to enforce the above regulations. We are told by the historian, Zia-ud-din Barani, that in matters of the revenue assessment and collection the entire kingdom was treated as a single village ; but from what Barani himself has written, it seems that measurement could not be introduced in all the provinces of Ala-ud-din's dominions. It was confined to some parts only. The net result was that the revenue increased considerably and all classes of

[1] As far as the Muslims were concerned, he probably charged from them one-fourth of the produce as land-revenue

the population, including cultivators, landholders, merchants and traders, were required to shoulder the burden. But whether Ala-ud-din desired it or not, the brunt of the burden had to be borne by the Hindus, a vast majority of whom were closely connected with the land.

Ala-ud-din was not in favour of grant of land to soldiers and officers in lieu of their salaries. Yet many men continued to enjoy the *iqtas* during his time as it was not possible to abolish the system altogether, specially in the newly conquered territories.

Centralisation of the administration

With a large army at his back, Ala-ud-din was able to suppress all lawless elements in his dominions and to take steps for the complete concentration of authority in his hands. Although there were the ministers, as usual, yet like Louis XIV of France or Frederick the Great of Prussia, Ala-ud-din was really his own prime minister. His ministers were secretaries or glorified clerks who had to carry out his will and look after the daily routine of administration. He did consult them whenever he liked, but he was not bound to accept their advice. The governors of provinces or *muqtis*, too, unlike in the days of his predecessors, were brought under greater control of the central government. His espionage, developed to frightful perfection, overawed the nobles and courtiers who feared to exchange views among themselves or even to talk aloud. We are told by the historian, Barani, that they communicated their thoughts by means of signs. While the Sultan put down the old nobility ruthlessly he raised the common people, who were possessed of merit and loyalty, to positions of importance. Throughout the kingdom no one could claim equality with the Sultan. All were reduced to the position of his vassals, servants or subjects. Under him the Sultanate reached a high watermark of despotism, the like of which had been unknown in India for ages.

FOREIGN POLICY

Project of conquests

Ala-ud-din was one of the most ambitious rulers that ever sat upon the throne of Delhi. After he had attained some success against the rebels and invaders, sometimes he dreamt of emulating the example of Alexander the Great and conquering the whole world. He even wanted to establish a religion of his own. One of his honest

and experienced courtiers, Ala-ul-mulk, the kotwal of Delhi, advised him to give up the wild project of founding a new religion, and to undertake the difficult, but desirable, task of conquering the whole of India before embarking on the conquest of the world. Ala-ud-din accepted the advice and set before him a grand scheme of subduing the independent Hindu states outside the borders of the Sultanate of Delhi. His foreign policy, therefore, was directed towards the achievement of one aim, namely, not to leave any independent Hindu chief in the country. It was not necessary to wait for any plausible cause or even pretext before invading a neighbour's territory. His wars were mostly unprovoked and undertaken in pursuit of a resolute ideal, namely, the conquest of the entire country. His policy of conquests may be divided into two parts : (1) conquest of northern India, and (2) conquest of south India.

CONQUEST OF THE NORTH

Gujarat

In 1299 he despatched an army under Ulugh Khan and Nasrat Khan for the conquest of Gujarat. That flourishing kingdom with its capital at Anhilwara (modern Patna), though raided more than once, had never been subdued by any Turkish invaders. It was ruled by the Baghela ruler, Karan. The Delhi army besieged Anhilwara and captured it, and Karan's wife, Kamla Devi, fell into the hands of the invaders. But Raja Karan escaped with his daughter, Deval Devi, and took shelter with Rama Chandra of Devagiri. The entire kingdom was occupied. Nasrat Khan found at Cambay a Hindu eunuch, named Kafur, whom he sent with the rich booty to Delhi. This boy eventually rose to be the prime minister of Ala-ud-din's kingdom. The rejoicing of the victors was disturbed by a rebellion of the new Muslims, or Mongols settled in India, on the question of the division of the spoils. They were, however, ruthlessly put down and almost exterminated.

Ranthambhor

Ala-ud-din's next expedition was directed against the fortress of Ranthambhor, formerly a Muslim outpost in Rajasthan, but at that time ruled by Hamir Deva, a descendant of the famous Chauhan king, Prithviraj II. There were two causes of the expedition. Firstly, it was a pious duty to recover a fortress that had formed part of the Turkish Sultanate of Delhi. Secondly, Hamir Deva had given

shelter to some of the rebellious New Muslims and Ala-ud-din thought it desirable to punish him for this audacity. Accordingly, Ulugh Khan and Nasrat Khan were sent against Hamir Deva. They occupied Jhain and besieged Ranthambhor, but were beaten. Nasrat Khan was killed and Jhain was recovered by the Rajputs. Ala-ud-din was obliged to proceed to Ranthambhor in person. The siege lasted for one full year and yet there seemed no prospect of success. The Sultan, therefore, had recourse to treachery. Hamir Deva's prime minister, Ran Mal, was seduced and, with his collusion, the siege was brought to a successful conclusion. The besiegers escaladed the walls of the fortrees and obtained possession of it (July 1301). Hamir Deva and his family and the remnant of the garrison were put to the sword. Ran Mal paid the penalty for his defection and was put to death at the Sultan's orders. Ala-ud-din returned victorious to Delhi.

Chittor

The Guhilots of Mewar had come into conflict with Iltutmish on account of their pre-eminent position among our indigenous rulers and had repulsed that Sultan's attack on their kingdom. After Iltutmish's death Delhi made little attempt to reduce that powerful state to submission. Early in 1303, however, Ala-ud-din resolved to conquer it and, starting from Delhi on 28th January, besieged its capital Chittor. It is said that his principal motive was to secure Padmini, the peerless queen of the reigning king, Ratna Singh, and reputed to be the most beautiful and accomplished woman in the country. Modern writers, like G. H. Ojha, Dr. K. S. Lal and others, have rejected this story as a later concoction. Although Ala-ud-din's ambition to establish his claim to be the ruler of the whole of India and his realisation of the fact that as long as Mewar remained independent he would not be able to make good that claim were enough reasons for undertaking the expedition, there is evidence, as we shall presently see, to believe that the Sultan did covet the fair Padmini. He surrounded the fort and pitched his white canopy on the top of an adjacent hillock, known as Chittauri. But all his attempts to capture the fort failed and the siege lasted for about five months. The brave Rajputs put up such a stout defence as elicited the admiration even of their foes. But it was futile to carry on an unequal struggle and Rana Ratna Singh had to submit (26th August, 1303). The women performed the awful rite of *jauhar* to

save their honour and the exasperated Ala-ud-din gave brutal orders for the slaughter of his brave enemies. Amir Khusrav, who was an eye witness, says that 30,000 Rajputs were killed in one day. The victorious Sultan left for Delhi after appointing his eldest son, Khizr Khan, governor of Chittor and naming it Khizrabad.

Chittor could not be held for long by the Khaljis owing, probably, to the constant trouble the patriotic Rajputs gave to the new administration. In 1311 Khizr Khan abandoned his post and the Sultan was obliged to appoint in his place a friendly chief named Maldeva, who was expected to keep the Guhilots in good humour and pay a tribute to Delhi. Soon after Ala-ud-din's death, Rana Hamir, the head of the junior branch of the Guhilot ruling family, drove away Maldeva and recovered possession of his ancestral State and its capital Chittor.

The Padmini episode

It has been mentioned that modern scholars have rejected as unhistorical the story that, baffled in his design to obtain possession of the fair Padmini, Ala-ud-din agreed to raise the siege and retire, if Ratna Singh only showed her beautiful face in a mirror, that he had the Rana arrested as soon as the latter conducted the gratified Sultan out of the fort to the latter's tents, and that he was rescued by the igenuity of his gifted spouse. Their reasons for rejecting the story are : (1) Amir Khusrav, who accompanied Ala-ud-din to Chittor and was present during the siege, has said nothing about it; (2) other contemporary writers, too, have made no mention of it; and (3) the story is a literary concoction of Malik Muhammad Jayasi, who wrote his *Padmavat* in 1540 A.D., and all the later writers have borrowed it from him. These arguments are based on a superficial reading of Khusrav's works and are fallacious. Amir Khusrav does throw a hint about the episode when he compares Ala-ud-din with Solomon, refers to his Seba as being in the fort of Chittor, and of himself as 'Hud-Hud', the bird that brought the news of the beautiful Bilquis, the queen of Seba,[2] to king Solomon of Ethiopia.[3] Khusrav's narrative makes it clear that Ala-ud-din entered the fort, accompanied by him, before it had capitulated "a fort to which

[2] Mr. Shrinetra Pande in his *History of Medieval India* (Hindi ed.) attempts to argue in favour of older writers and compares 'the queen of Seba' with 'wealth', an inanimate object. He ignores Habib's note that probably the poet refers to the fair Padmini.

[3] Khusrav's *Khazain-ul-Futuh*, translated by M. Habib, p. 48.

birds were unable to fly." The Rana came to Ala-ud-din's tents and submitted only after the Sultan had returned from the fort. After the Rana's submission the massacre of 30,000 Hindus took place by the disappointed Sultan's orders.[4] Reading between the lines brings to light the main incidents of the story. Khusrav, who was a court poet, was not in a position to write anything more than he actually did. And we know that he had omitted many an unpalatable truth, such as, Ala-ud-din's murder of his uncle Jalal-ud-din, the Sultan's defeat at the hands of the Mongols, the Mongol siege of Delhi, etc. It is wrong to say, as Ojha, K. S. Lal and others have contended, that the incident was concocted by Jayasi. The fact is that Jayasi wrote out a romance, the plot of which he had derived from Amir Khusrav's *Khazain-ul-Futuh*. Most of the romantic details of Jayasi's *Padmavat* are imaginary; but the main plot of the story that Padmini was coveted by Ala-ud-din and was shown in a mirror to the lustful Sultan, who had her husband arrested, is most probably based on historical truth. It seems the women performed *jauhar* after Ratna Singh's arrest and then the Rajputs fell on the invaders and rescued the Rana. But they were cut down to a man and the fort and the country passed into Ala-ud-din's hands.

Malwa

In 1305 Ain-ul-mulk Multani was directed to proceed to Jalor and Ujjain with a view to reduce the province of Malwa which is adjacent to Rajasthan, a major portion of which had already passed under the control of Delhi. Ain-ul-mulk fought a very severe battle with Raja Harananda on 9th December, 1305, and defeated him. The victory enabled the Delhi army to occupy Ujjain, Mandu, Dhar and Chanderi. Ala-ud-din appointed a governor to take charge of these places. Kanera Deva of Jalor also submitted and acknowledged the Sultan to be his suzerain.

Marwar

In or about 1308 the Sultan made arrangements for the conquest of Marwar, the only important region in Rajasthan that had so far eluded Turkish attempt at its subjugation. The Delhi army now besieged Siwana, the most important stronghold in that part of the country. The siege lasted for a long time and there seemed to be little prospect of its successful termination. Ala-ud-din's

[4] *Ibid*, p. 49.

patience was tired and he himself proceeded to the place and infused such vigour into the operations that the king of Marwar, Sitala Deva, agreed to sue for peace. He was compelled to appear before the Sultan and was allowed to remain in possession of the fort. But his country was occupied and divided among the Delhi nobles.

Jalor

Though Raja Kanera Deva of Jalor had sworn allegiance to the Sultan in 1305, he indulged in loose talk and boasted that he would be prepared at any time to meet Ala-ud-din in the field. This enraged the Sultan and, in order to humiliate the Raja, he sent an army against him under the command of a female servant of his palace, named Gul-i-Bihisht. She besieged Jalor. Kanera Deva was so hard-pressed that he was about to surrender when she died. Her son was defeated and killed by the Rajputs. But when some additional troops under Kamal-ud-din Gurg reached Jalor, the Delhi army defeated the Raja and put him and his relations to death. Jalor was then annexed.

The conquest of northern India was now almost complete and Ala-ud-din's empire extended over the whole of that region except Kashmir, Nepal, Assam and a part of the north-western Panjab.

CONQUEST OF THE DAKHIN

Ala-ud-din was determined to conquer the Dakhin also. He was the first Sultan of Delhi to cross the Vindhya mountains and to attempt to subjugate the southern peninsula. Mention has been made of his success against Rama Chandra of Devagiri in 1294. At that time there were four powerful kingdoms in southern India. They were : (1) the Yadava kingdom of Devagiri in the west, comprising Maharashtra, with its capital at Devagiri (modern Daultabad) ; (2) the Kakatiya kingdom of Telingana in the east, with its capital at Warangal; (3) the Hoysala kingdom, with its capital at Dwarasamudra, lying south of the river Krishna and comprising the whole of modern Mysore besides some other districts; and (4) the Pandya kingdom of the far south, with its capital at Madura. Unlike his policy in northern India, which he wanted to annex and rule directly, Ala-ud-din only desired to compel the rulers of southern India to acknowledge his supremacy and to send him annual tributes. He wanted to leave their dominions in their hands on

condition of vassalage. His chief object was to get as much wealth from that region as possible.

Failure against Warangal

Ala-ud-din had already reduced the kingdom of Devagiri to subjugation in 1294 and compelled its ruler to yield a huge treasure and to become his vassal. In 1303 he sent an army under Chhajju, nephew and successor of Nasrat Khan, to subjugate and plunder Telingana, the second kingdom in the Dakhin. This army marched through Bangal and Orissa and attacked Warangal, but was defeated by the Kakatiya ruler Prataprudra Deva, and compelled to flee back in disorder.

Devagiri re-conquered

Raja Rama Chandra of Devagiri had failed for three years to remit the revenue of the province of Illichpur which he had ceded to Ala-ud-din in 1294. In order, therefore, to reduce him to submission, an army was sent under Malik Kafur, who now held the office of the naib of the kingdom, in 1306-7. The naib was also required to bring Deval Devi, daughter of Raja Karan of Gujarat, as she was required by her mother, Kamla Devi, now in Ala-ud-din's *harem* at Delhi. Karan, who had established himself as the ruler of a petty principality in the Baglan region, had made arrangements for marrying Deval Devi to prince Shankar, the eldest son of Rama Chandra of Devagiri. While she was being escorted towards Devagiri, she fell into the hands of Alp Khan, governor of Gujarat, who was proceeding to join Malik Kafur in order to co-operate with him in the Devagiri expedition. Deval Devi was sent to Delhi and married to Khizr Khan, Ala-ud-din's eldest son. Alp Khan then defeated Karan who was compelled to retreat to Devagiri to take shelter there. Meanwhile, Malik Kafur had occupied Illichpur and appointed a Turkish governor to take charge of it. Then he marched upon Devagiri itself. Rama Chandra Deva submitted. He went to Delhi and made presents of enormous value to the Sultan from whom he received the title of *Rai-i-Rayan*. He was allowed to remain in possession of the State and was, besides, given the district of Navasari as a personal jagir.

Telingana

The failure in 1303 of an expedition against Warangal was rankling in the bosom of Ala-ud-din who was anxious to wipe off

the disgrace as soon as he could. Accordingly, Malik Kafur was sent to accomplish the work in 1308. Warangal, the capital city of the Kakatiya kingdom, was surrounded by two strong walls, the outer one of which was of earth, while the inner one was made of stone. Its ruler, Prataprudra II, who had defeated Chhajju's expedition in 1303, was taken by surprise. Kafur besieged Warangal and inflicted a heavy loss on the garrison inside by numerous assaults. So the Raja submitted and offered an indemnity of 300 elephants, 7,000 horses, a large quantity of cash and jewels and agreed to pay annual tribute.

The Hoysala kingdom of Dwarasamudra

Ala-ud-din now planned to subjugate the third powerful Dakhin kingdom. In 1310 Malik Kafur and Khwaja Haji were against sent across the Vindhyachala mountains at the head of a large army. On entering the kingdom of Devagiri, where Shankar Deva had succeeded his father, Rama Chandra, in 1309-10, Kafur established a garrison at Jalna on the Godavari to protect his line of communication with Delhi. This step was taken because Shankar Deva's loyalty was not above suspicion. From Devagiri Kafur took the road to Dwarasamudra (Dwaravatipura). His movement was so rapid that the Hoysala ruler Vira Ballala III was taken by surprise. He was defeated and his capital was occupied by the invaders. Kafur plundered the rich temples of the town. The Hoysala king was obliged to pay an enormous war indemnity and to agree to become a vassal of the Sultan of Delhi.

The Pandya kingdom

From Dwarasamudra Kafur marched to the Pandya kingdom which lay in the extreme south of the Dakhin peninsula. The succession to the throne of this kingdom was disputed between two brothers, named, Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya. Sundara Pandya, who was defeated by his brother, Vira Pandya, had gone to Delhi and sought Ala-ud-din's help for the recovery of his throne. That was why Kafur had ventured to advance rapidly into an unknown region. He reached Madura which was abandoned by the ruler, Vira Pandya. Kafur plundered the place and destroyed its chief temple and then proceeded eastwards to the sea-coast. He reached Rameshwaram on the island of Pamban, where he destroyed the great temple and built a mosque and named it after Ala-ud-

din. After these exploits he returned to Delhi in 1311 with enormous spoils "which included 312 elephants, 20,000 horses, 2,750 pounds of gold, equal in value to ten crores of *tankas* and chests of jewels. No such booty had ever before been brought to Delhi."

The last Dakhin expedition

Shankar Deva of Devagiri was a patriotic and energetic ruler, and was anxious to throw off the Turkish yoke. After Kafur's return to Delhi he did not remit the usual yearly tribute. The Sultan, therefore, despatched Malik Kafur once again in 1313 to call Shankar Deva to account. There was another reason for the expedition. Prataprudra of Warangal had written to the Sultan to send some officer to receive his tribute there, as Delhi was so far off from his capital. Kafur appeared at Devagiri. Shankar Deva was defeated and killed. From Devagiri he proceeded to Gulbarga, which he captured. Next, he occupied the territory between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers and established garrisons at Raichur and Mudgal. Now he proceeded westward and took the sea-ports of Dabhol and Chaul. After this he again invaded the Hoysala kingdom of Vira Ballala III. After all these conquests Kafur returned to Delhi with valuable spoils.

The conquest of the Dakhin was now complete. Almost the whole of southern India was brought under the suzerainty of Delhi. But southern India was not annexed. Only a few garrisons of Turkish troops were established at important towns.

The Mongol invasions : North-Western Frontier policy

Ala-ud-din's reign was greatly disturbed by a series of Mongol invasions which threatened not only the Panjab, Multan and Sindh but even the capital city of Delhi and the fertile region of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. It will be recalled that Balban had been prevented from following the policy of conquest of the neighbouring Hindu principalities owing to the threat of ever-recurring Mongol raids on his frontier. Ala-ud-din, however, was much more able and adventurous than Balban. He could successfully keep the Mongols in check and, at the same time, pursue a policy of aggressive warfare in the interior of India. It is said that he repelled more than a dozen Mongol invasions. The Mongols had begun to give him trouble right from the beginning of his reign and continued to do so till 1308. Ala-ud-din could, therefore, enjoy repose from this trouble for a little over seven years only.

The first Mongol invasion occurred at the end of 1296 when Ala-ud-din had been only a few months on the throne. Zafar Khan, one of his four bosom friends, was despatched against them. He encountered the invaders near Jalandar and defeated them with great slaughter. The second invasion took place in 1297. This time the Mongols captured the fortress of Siri very near Delhi, but Zafar Khan, upon whom had devolved the work of guarding the north-western frontier, defeated the invaders, recaptured the town after a short siege and took the Mongol leader with 1,700 of his followers, including their wives and children, prisoners and sent them to Delhi. In 1299 the Mongols appeared again under their leader, Qutlugh Khwaja, who had an army of two lakh Mongols under his command. Their object this time was not plunder but conquest. They marched to the neighbourhood of Delhi without molesting the inhabitants and prepared to besiege the capital city. It was a time of dangerous crisis for the Sultan who sought the advice of his friend, Ala-ul-mulk, as to the measures to be adopted for the safety of the capital. The kotwal advised him to temporise with the invaders instead of attacking them at once. Ala-ud-din, however, refused to accept this advice and attacked the Mongols the next morning. The advance guard of the royal army was led by Zafar Khan who defeated the enemy and pursued him relentlessly. He was drawn away from the main part of the royal army and was surrounded and slain by the Mongols. But the invaders lost heart and fled back to their country. The impression created by Zafar Khan proved so lasting that Mongol soldiers urged their weary horses to drink water "by asking whether they had seen Zafar Khan that they feared to slake their thirst !" Ala-ud-din, however, did not seem to have taken seriously the loss of such a valiant commander as Zafar Khan, for he looked upon him as a dangerously ambitious man.

The fourth important Mongol invasion occurred at a time when the Sultan was occupied in the siege of Chittor and when one of his armies had suffered a great reverse in Telingana. A Mongol army 12,000 strong, under their leader, Taghi, reached and encamped near Delhi. Their movement had been so rapid as to prevent the governors from the provinces to reach Delhi with their contingents. Ala-ud-din was obliged to take shelter in the fortress of Siri where he was besieged for two months. The Mongols plundered the surrounding country and carried their raids even into the streets of

Delhi. But, fortunately, the Mongols withdrew after three months of campaigning, as they were not experienced in the art of capturing towns by a regular siege.

Seeing that huge Mongol armies had twice reached Delhi without any hindrance or opposition on the way, Ala-ud-din took effective measures to protect the frontier so as to prevent a future raid on his capital. He repaired the old forts in the Panjab, Multan and Sindh, and built new ones. All these were garrisoned with powerful troops. Besides, he posted an additional army charged with the duty of guarding the frontier. He appointed a special governor of the frontier region who became known as the Warden of the Marches.

Inspite, however, of the above measures, a Mongol army, led by Ali Beg, a descendant of Changiz Khan, raided the Panjab and, evading the frontier garrisons, appeared in the neighbourhood of Amroha, plundering and burning the country on the way. Malik Kafur and Ghazi Malik were sent to encounter the invaders. They intercepted the invader while they were on their return journey, laden with huge plunder. The Mongols were defeated and their leaders were taken prisoners. The two topmost Mongol chiefs were trampled to death by elephants. Other prisoners were put to death and their heads were built into the walls of the fortress of Siri. It was after this that the veteran military commander, Ghazi Malik, was appointed governor of the Panjab in 1305. He successfully defended the frontier throughout Ala-ud-din's reign. The Mongols appeared again in 1306. Crossing the Indus near Multan, they proceeded towards the Himalayas, plundering the country as usual. Ghazi Malik successfully barred their passage and attacked and killed a large number of them. Fifty thousand of the invaders, including their leader, Kabk, were taken prisoners. They were put to death and their wives and children were sold as slaves.

The last Mongol invasion took place in 1307-8. Their army was led by a chief named Iqbalmand. He crossed the Indus, but could not proceed much further when he was encountered, defeated and slain. Quite a large number of the invaders were taken prisoners and were sent to Delhi where they were put to death. The Mongols did not venture after that date (1308) to disturb Ala-ud-din, and the country remained immune from their barbarous inroads until the time of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak.

Last days and death

Ala-ud-din's last days were clouded with trouble and disappointment. Owing to hard work and excessive indulgence, his health was undermined and he was obliged to take to his bed. His wife and sons neglected him altogether and his malady was still further aggravated. The queen, who had been neglected by her husband, enjoyed herself with festivities in the palace, while Khizr Khan, his eldest son, could not spare time from his pleasures. The disappointed Sultan, therefore, summoned Malik Kafur from the Dakhin and Alp Khan from Gujarat and complained to them about the treatment of his wife and sons. Kafur, perceiving that the Sultan's end was near, hatched a conspiracy of putting away his rivals from his path of ambition and to seize the throne for himself. He made Ala-ud-din believe that Khizr Khan, the queen and Alp Khan had entered into a plot to take his life. Khizr Khan, therefore, was sent to the prison fortress of Gwalior and the queen was imprisoned in old Delhi. Alp Khan was put to death. The result of these tyrannical measures was very bad. Alp Khan's troops rose in rebellion in Gujarat. The Rana of Chittor drove away the Muslim garrison and reoccupied his capital. Harapala Deva, the successor of Shankar Deva in Devagiri, declared himself independent and banished the Turkish garrison from his country. The news of these rebellions aggravated Ala-ud-din's disorder and he died on 2nd January, 1316.

His estimate

Historians hold diametrically opposite views about the character and achievements of Ala-ud-din Khalji. According to Elphinstone, his reign was glorious, and, inspite of many absurd and oppressive measures, he was, on the whole, a successful monarch and exhibited a just exercise of his powers. V. A. Smith, on the other hand, considered Elphinstone's judgment as too lenient. According to him, "facts do not warrant the assertion that he exhibited a just exercise of his powers and that his reign was glorious." He concludes by saying : "In reality he (Ala-ud-din) was a particularly savage tyrant with very little regard for justice and his reign, though marked by the conquest of Gujarat and many successful raids, like the storming of the two great fortresses, was exceedingly disgraceful in many respects."

It is, however, universally admitted that Ala-ud-din was a very brave soldier and a successful general. His basic qualities were ambition, energy, courage, daring and resourcefulness. He could command the most faithful service from his subordinates and make them serve his interest. He was, besides, an able administrator and statesman. He was possessed of originality of a high order. He did not rest satisfied with administering the institutions that came to him as an inheritance from his predecessors; he was anxious to reform them. He even brought new institutions into existence for the benefit of himself and his kingdom. He was the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi to lay the foundation of a powerful standing army and to do away with corruption that had crept into the organisation. To him belongs the credit of being the first Turkish ruler in the land to reform the revenue rules and regulations and to introduce a system of measurement as a preliminary to fixing the State demand of the produce of the soil. He was, again, the first to revolutionise the conservative branch of revenue administration by his successful policy of putting an end to the privileges of the hereditary revenue officers and assignees of land. His successful control of the market and the tariff system had no parallel before or after him throughout the medieval period of our country's history. He was, also, the first Turkish conqueror who set his foot beyond the Vindhyachala mountains. He subjugated the whole of the Dakhin, making it subservient to the crown of Delhi. He thus gave political unity to almost the whole of the sub-continent of India. He completed Balban's work of consolidation by bringing the provinces under a more rigorous control of the central government and giving the Sultanate some measure of administrative uniformity. He had the wisdom and the courage to brush aside the interference of the Muslim *ulema* in the affairs of the State and to avow openly that in political and administrative matters secular considerations alone must prevail. Such an attitude was unknown to all his predecessors on the throne of Delhi.

Ala-ud-din may be called the first Turkish empire-builder in this country. Turkish imperialism reached its highest watermark under this ruler. While all his predecessors, including Balban, had shrunk from the task of defending the Sultanate of Delhi from the ever-recurring Mongol invasions and, at the same time, carrying on aggressive warfare in the interior of the country, Ala-ud-din success-

fully accomplished this twofold task. This alone entitles this Khalji ruler to a place higher than that occupied by any of his predecessors in the thirteenth century. He may, therefore, rightly be called the first Turkish emperor of India. Throughout his reign the country enjoyed complete peace and order. Brigandage was stamped out. "Justice was executed with such rigour that robbery and theft, formerly so common, were not heard of in the land. The traveller slept secure on the highway and the merchant carried his commodities with safety from the Sea of Bangal to the mountains of Kabul and from Telingana to Kashmir."

Though himself illiterate, Ala-ud-din was a great patron of learning and fine arts. There were many first-rate poets and scholars at his court, including such literary lights as Amir Khusrav and Amir Hasan of Delhi. He was a lover of architecture and one of his buildings, known as *Alai Darwaza,* which is an extension of the Qutubi mosque in Delhi, is, in the eyes of critics, the most beautiful and perfect specimen of early Turkish architecture. He built palaces and mosques also, such as the fort of Siri and the 'Palace of a Thousand Pillars', called Hazar Situn.

But there is another side of his character and personality. Ala-ud-din was not all good. He suffered from certain grave defects. His private life was marred by excessive indulgence in natural and unnatural sexual corruption. He was, by nature, selfish and had no regard for the ties of friendship or even filial relationship. He was cruel and almost savage in inflicting punishments. While Balban was ruthless in slaughtering the Hindus who resisted him in order to retain their freedom, Ala-ud-din did not spare Musalmans even. He awarded the barbarous punishments of mutilation and death for very ordinary crimes. He visited the sins of rebels and others on the heads of their innocent women and children. Ala-ud-din was a believer in the policy of blood and iron. He resembled Bismarck, the German Chancellor, in subscribing to the theory that "the end justifies the means." He had no other consideration than the attainment of his objects by fair or foul means. In short, he was thoroughly unscrupulous and cruel. Some of the modern writers do not find fault with him for his policy of ruthlessness; for, according to them, certain amount of ruthlessness was necessary as he lived in an age of 'treachery and strife'. But this view is hardly correct. The masses of the Indian people were as innocent and free from guilt and even

from rebellious tendencies as they are now or in any period of our history. The trouble was that the Sultans of Delhi were foreign rulers and, as such, it never entered into their scheme of things to win the affection, or even the goodwill, of the common people. The greatest defect in Ala-ud-din's work was that his administrative system lacked permanence, as it was based on naked force and not on the goodwill of the people.

A balanced view of Ala-ud-din's work and achievements must give him a high place among the rulers of Delhi during the medieval age. He was, unquestionably, the ablest Sultan during the entire period of the Sultanate of Delhi. Only one ruler of the period, namely, Muhammad bin Tughluq, challenges comparison with him in constructive ability and breadth of vision. But Muhammad Tughluq failed disastrously, while Ala-ud-din Khalji achieved success in everything that he undertook.

QUTUB-UD-DIN MUBARAK, 1316-1320

Accession

Under the influence of Malik Kafur, Ala-ud-din had disinherited his eldest son, Khizr Khan, and nominated his minor son, Shihab-ud-din Umar, as his successor. On the Sultan's death this boy, aged about six years, was placed upon the throne by Malik Kafur who became the regent and *de facto* ruler. He caused Khizr Khan and his younger brother, Shadi Khan, to be blinded. The regent then married Ala-ud-din's widow, appropriated all her jewellery and property and, finally, threw her into prison. He imprisoned the third son of Ala-ud-din, Mubarak Khan, then aged seventeen or eighteen years, and sent some of his agents to take out his eyes; but Mubarak bribed these men and sent them back to slay Kafur, which task they performed without difficulty. The nobles then recognised Mubarak as regent for his brother. After acting for about two months in that capacity, Mubarak dethroned and blinded his brother and seized the throne for himself. He carried out his enthronement on April 1, 1316, and assumed the title of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak Shah.

Old ordinances cancelled

Mubarak began his reign well with the good-will of the nobles and the people. He released all prisoners and repealed all the harsh ordinances of his father's time. He recalled those of the old nobles

and officers who had been banished by his father. Thus he followed the policy of forget and forgive. The murderers of Malik Kafur, however, were punished, as they demanded extravagant honours for themselves. The compulsory control of the market was done away with, confiscated lands were restored to their legitimate owners, and many of the taxes were reduced. People at last heaved a sigh of relief. As Barani says, they were no longer in fear of hearing the words "……do this, but do not do that; say this, but do not say that……" But the sudden removal of the strict ordinances produced an outburst of licence. There was a fall in the moral standard of the courtiers and the official class. The new Sultan, from almost the beginning of his reign, devoted himself to sensual pleasures and fell under the influence of a handsome favourite named Hasan who originally belonged to a depressed caste Bharvar —or Shepherd—and had recently become a convert to Islam. He was given the title of Khusrav[5] and raised to the position of prime minister. The king's example was followed by his courtiers. The administration became slack.

Rebellions : Devagiri and Madura reconquered

The lawless elements of the population at once took advantage of the change of administration. There was a rebellion in Gujarat. The Yadava ruler of Devagiri asserted his independence and some of the important states of Rajputana, particularly Marwar, became free. It became necessary for the king to restore order. Ain-ul-mulk Multani was sent to Gujarat; he succeeded in quelling the rebellion there. The Sultan's father-in-law, Zafar Khan, was now appointed its governor. Mubarak took upon himself the duty of recovering Devagiri. He set out for the Dakhin in 1317. Harapala Deva, the ruler of Devagiri, frightened by the news of the Sultan's approach, fled from his capital. But he was captured and was flayed and his skin was stretched open, while his head was placed on one of the gates of Devagiri. The whole of Devagiri was divided into districts and placed in the hands of Turkish officers. Garrisons were established in the country. Gulbarga, Sagar and Dwarasamudra were occupied and placed under Muslim officers. Mubarak built a mosque at Devagiri from the materials of the Hindu temples which

[5] For a discussion of Khusrav's origin, see my paper in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1953.

he demolished. He appointed Malik Yaklaki to be the governor of Devagiri and sent Khusrav to reduce Madura and then returned to Delhi.

Conspiracy against Mubarak

During his journey back to Delhi, a conspiracy was hatched against the life of the Sultan. The chief conspirator was his cousin, Asad-ud-din, son of Yaghrush Khan, brother of Firoz Khalji. The conspirators planned to kill the Sultan and place a ten-year old son of Khizr Khan on the throne. One of the conspirators revealed the plot to the king who had the conspirators arrested and put to death. The conspiracy so much enraged Mubarak that he ordered all the male descendants of Yaghrush Khan to be put to death. At the same time, his brothers, Khizr Khan, Shadi Khan and Shihab-ud-din, were killed at his orders. He then married Deval Devi, Khizr Khan's widow.

Mubarak's conduct : administration disorganised

Mubarak's success in the Dakhin seems to have turned his head. He had his father-in-law, Zafar Khan, and his favourite, Shahim, whom he had left as his regent at Delhi during his absence in the Dakhin, murdered without any apparent reason. He neglected the administration and threw himself heart and soul into sensual pleasures. It is said that he appeared before his courtiers in female attire. He allowed jesters and courtesans to greet old and experienced nobles with lewd gestures and foul abuse. Barani tells us that sometimes the Sultan would run naked among his courtiers. The result was that all respect for the crown vanished and lawlessness everywhere raised its head. Malik Yaklaki, governor of Devagiri, raised the standard of rebellion and proclaimed himself king. He was, however, defeated by the loyal officer in the Dakhin and sent a prisoner to Delhi. Mubarak, instead of punishing him with death, ordered only his nose and ears to be cut off. He even pardoned him a little after and appointed him governor of Samana; but the associates of Yaklaki were put to death. Khusrav's half-brother, Hisan-ud-din, who was appointed governor of Gujarat in place of Zafar Khan, revolted there, but like Yaklaki, he was defeated by some of the loyal nobles and sent a prisoner to Delhi. The king forgave him altogether in order to please his favourite, Khusrav. Khusrav himself harboured a design of carving out a

kingdom for himself in the Dakhin. When some of the officers informed the king about his treasonable intention, Mubarak disbelieved it. He summoned Khusrav to the capital and punished his accusers with dismissal and imprisonment.

Mubarak murdered

Khusrav had realised that it would not be possible for him to seize the throne without an army of his own. He sought the king's permission to raise a corps of 40,000 horse, consisting mostly of the Bharvars of Gujarat, a tribe to which Khusrav himself belonged. Mubarak agreed. Next, Khusrav requested that his relations and friends should be permitted to enter the palace gates and see him inside the palace, if they had any urgent work with him. This request was also granted. Khusrav had now his plan ready for the assassination of the king. A warning, however, was given to Mubarak by his former tutor. The Sultan paid no heed to it. On the night of April 14, 1320, when Khusrav's conspiracy had matured, his troops entered the palace and cut down the royal guards. The noise reached the upper storey of the palace and the Sultan enquired from Khusrav as to what it was about. Khusrav replied that men were trying to catch some horses which had broken loose. As Khusrav spoke these words his followers reached Mubarak's apartment. The Sultan sprang up in terror and ran towards the female apartments of the palace; but Khusrav seized him by the hair, while one of his followers named Jaharia stabbed him to death. Mubarak's head was severed from the body and thrown down into the courtyard.

His estimate

Qutub-ud-din Mubarak was the last king of the Khalji dynasty, and he was also the most worthless. He did not lack ability or courage, as he displayed both during the first year of his reign in his campaigns in the Dakhin. But his character was completely undermined by his excess in venery and prostitution. He was so infatuated by his favourite, Khusrav, that he failed to see the inordinate ambition of this low-born convert. Mubarak suffered a just penalty for his profligacy, folly and wicked conduct.

It was reserved for this licentious and good-for-nothing Khalji ruler to get rid of the age-long tradition of theoretical

unity of the Muslim world. He kicked the idea of Khilafat and assumed the title of Khalifa, the viceregent of God of heaven and earth.

NASIR-UD-DIN KHUSRAV SHAH,[6] 15th April—5th Sept., 1320

Immediately after Mubarak's murder, Khusrav summoned the chief nobles to the court and obtained their approval to the *fait accompli*. With their consent he ascended the throne under the title of Nasir-ud-din Khusrav Shah (15th April, 1320). He confirmed most of the old officers and nobles in their posts; but those of them who were known to be partisans of the Khaljis were removed. Some of them were put to death. Khusrav married Deval Devi, the widow of Khizr Khan. He proceeded to win over as many of the nobles and officers as possible by a lavish distribution of honours and rewards. Wahid-ud-din Quraishi, who was a minister of Mubarak, was given the title of *Taj-ul-mulk* and was allowed to retain his post. Ain-ul-mulk Multani was confirmed and further promoted and given the titles of Alam Khan and *Amir-ul-Umara*. Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna was appointed master of the horse, while his father, Ghazi Malik, remained governor of the Panjab and warden of the marches. Several other Turkish officers, such as the governor of Multan, the governor of Samana named Malik Yaklaki, and the governor of Siwistan, gave their allegiance to the new ruler. Some of the most renowned and pious *shaikhs*, particularly the celebrated Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya of Delhi, were won over by distribution of money. They supported the new reign. Khusrav's own followers, who were mostly members of his tribe from Gujarat and Hindu by religion, were richly rewarded for their co-operation and services.

But Khusrav was an Indian Musalman, one who had become a convert to this religion but had originally been a Hindu of Bharvar or shepherd caste from Gujarat. This was intolerable to the racial pride of the arrogant Turks who had so far monopolised power and who would not brook the idea of an Indian Musalman appropriating to himself the sovereignty of the kingdom. Hence some of the Turkish *maliks* and *amirs* raised the cry that Islam was in danger in Hindustan. They charged Khusrav with being a half Hindu and with insulting Islam and promoting idolatrous worship in the palace.[7]

[6] See Appendix A.

[7] For Hindu worship in the palace, some of Khusrav Shah's relations, who were Hindus, were responsible. This is clearly recorded in *Tabqat-i-Akbari* (Persian Text), Vol. I, p. 187.

Zia-ud-din Barani, the historian, who belonged to their fraternity, has indulged in bitter invective and tried to show that Khusrav was thoroughly unpopular with all the nobles and the people. The fact, however, is that he was supported by a large number of influential Muslim commanders and officers and had the moral support of important Muslim divines, such as Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya. Only a small minority, for racial as well as for personal reasons, was opposed to him. Ghazi Malik, the warden of the marches, had his own ambition. He was, moreover, representative of the thirteenth century Turkish oligarchs who were bitter opponents of the claims of Indian Musalmans to have a share in the government of the country. So he put himself at the head of a movement against Khusrav and made an attempt to win the support of the governors of Siwistan, Multan and Samana, but without success. He invited Ain-ul-mulk Multani to join the party. None of these, however, gave their support to Ghazi Malik, probably because they did not see any danger to Islam. Having failed in this Ghazi Malik resorted to intrigue and instigated the lower officers in the above three provinces against the new king and fomented a rebellion. This plan was successful. The reactionary officers in alliance with the fanatical population of these three provinces were easily won over.

While this move was going on silently, Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna, son of Ghazi Malik, escaped secretly one night from Delhi and joined his father at Dipalpur. When all was ready, Ghazi Malik marched against Delhi. Malik Yaklaki, governor of Samana, opposed him, but was defeated. He was again encountered at Sirsa by Hisam-ud-din, the new king's half-brother; but the latter was defeated and put to flight. As Ghazi Malik approached Delhi, Khusrav came out of the capital and met the rebels near Indraprastha. Before the battle Ain-ul-mulk withdrew along with his troops to Malwa. Yet Khusrav fought boldly on 5th September, 1320, but was defeated and killed.

Since the establishment of the Turkish Sultanate in northern India only two attempts were made by Indian Muslims to seize power. The first notable Indian Musalman to aspire *de facto* control of government was Imad-ud-din Rayhan, who ruled as prime minister for a period of one year only. But he fell a prey to the racial arrogance of the Turkish monopolists. Khusrav was the second Indian Muslim to aspire for power, not as a minister but as a full-fledged

sovereign; but he, too, became a victim of Turkish intrigue and racial intolerance. Khusrav was a Musalman. It did not matter what he had been before his conversion to that religion. As Islam claims to be a democratic religion and believes that kingship is not the monopoly of any privileged class but belongs to those who have the power and ability to hold it, there was no reason why Khusrav should have been debarred from enjoying the position he had won. The charge that he insulted Islam and allowed idolatrous worship and 'the use of the copies of the *Quran* as seats and stools' was nothing more than an interested propaganda designed to cloak the ambition of Ghazi Malik and his son, Jauna Khan. The *Shaikh-ul-Islam* (Nizam-ud-din Auliya) at Delhi should have been a better judge of the king's religious conduct than the military governor in a far-off province. If Khusrav was a murderer of his benefactor, so was Ala-ud-din Khalji and, possibly, Balban also. It is a pity that modern writers of our medieval history have become dupes of exaggerated denunciations indulged in by Barani and copied by later historians. Ghazi Malik was successful and captured the throne of Delhi in September 1320.

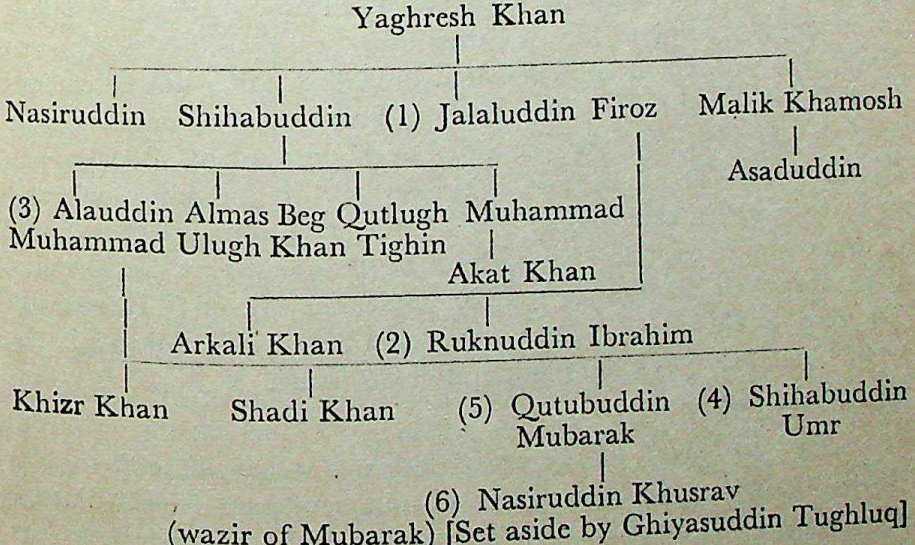
Weakness of the Khalji system

The empire built up by Ala-ud-din rested on a weak foundation and, therefore, it did not survive its founder. The reasons for its ultimate failure are not too difficult to perceive. Some of the very elements which had contributed most to its up-building became in the long run the elements of weakness and instability—vital causes of its eventual downfall. The system depended upon the Sultan's genius. Individual genius has its limitations. Ala-ud-din was a genius; but he was also human. As he grew older he became less able to put up with exertion and fatigue. He became fond of ease and could not supervise the work of his subordinates who mismanaged things. There were rebellions before he closed his eyes in death. Secondly, Khalji imperialism was based on military force and not on the willing consent of the people. Force always tends to become tyrannical and cares more for glory than for the welfare of the people. This was so with Ala-ud-din whose administration became more and more unpopular as time passed on. The Turkish nobles, who were deprived of their power and prestige, were estranged. The Hindu chiefs groaned under the restrains and humiliations

mposed upon them. The Mongols, called the New Muslims, continued plotting and intriguing against him. Those of the nobles who still wielded some power and commanded prestige were alienated, as low-born upstarts were raised to positions of honour and equality with them. The rigours of the espionage terrified the middle and upper class people. The traders and merchants resented the strict control of the market. Thus, all classes of people were sick of the despotic administration and waited for an opportunity to throw it off. Ala-ud-din did not ensure the continuity of the system by giving the right kind of training to his sons and successors. Khizr Khan and his brothers grew up into weaklings, addicted to sensual pleasures and unfit to hold intact the big empire created by their father. Fortunately for the people, Ala-ud-din's favourite, Malik Kafur, who enjoyed ascendancy at the court, fomented quarrel in the royal household and brought about a rift in the ruling family. Royal authority was weakened, and this gave an opportunity to ambitious people to revolt. There were rebellions in the Dakhin, in Rajasthan and in some other parts of the country. Although Ala-ud-din's successor succeeded in putting down the rebellions, he had to make concession to the people by withdrawing most of the obnoxious regulations of his father's time. When he was murdered, four years later, the system fell with a mighty crash.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Khalji Dynasty



10

THE TUGHLUQ DYNASTY

GHIYAS-UD-DIN TUGHLUQ SHAH, 1320—1325

Early career

Ghazi Tughluq was a man of humble origin. His father was a Turki slave of Balban and his mother a Jat woman of the Panjab. He seems to have begun his life as an ordinary trooper, but he rose to a position of importance by dint of his ability and hard labour. In 1305 he was appointed governor of the Panjab with his head-quarters at Dipalpur. He was entrusted with the duty of the protection of the north-western frontier from the Mongols. It is said that he encountered the invaders on twenty-nine occasions and defeated them. Hence he was called Malik-ul-Ghazi. Towards the end of Ala-ud-din's reign he became one of the few powerful Turkish nobles in the kingdom. He retained his position during the reign of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak. On his accession Khusrav tried to conciliate him and confirmed him in the governorship of the Panjab; but he and his son, Fakhr-ud-din Jauna, had their own ambition. This, together with Ghazi Malik's thirteenth century racial and religious orthodoxy, prompted him to organise the opposition to Khusrav Shah, who was, eventually, defeated and killed. After this he entered Delhi as a conqueror. He is said to have caused an enquiry to be made whether there yet remained any descendant of Ala-ud-din Khalji whom he might raise to the throne. It is doubtful whether he was sincere in this enquiry or whether he had made this display in order to win popular sympathy. Be that as it may, he ascended the throne on September 8, 1320, under the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq Shah Ghazi. He was the first Sultan of Delhi to add the word Ghazi (slayer of the infidel) after his name.

Domestic policy

The first work of the new Sultan was to conciliate the nobles and the people. He enjoyed the advantage of pure Turkish lineage and hence felt no difficulty in establishing his authority over the

remnants of the Turkish nobles and officers. He made an arrangement for giving away in marriage the Khalji girls who had survived the downfall of their house. Like a wise politician, he did not take steps against the nobles who had supported Khusrav and confirmed all important officers in their posts. He dealt strictly with the confirmed partisans of the late regime who were dismissed from their offices and deprived of their lands. He restored the lands of those who had been deprived of them by Ala-ud-din Khalji. He tried to recover the treasure which had been squandered by Khusrav or plundered during the confusion that followed his downfall; but he encountered much opposition from some of those who had been benefitted by its prodigal distribution. Large sums of money had been given away by Khusrav to the leading shaikhs of Delhi, some of whom returned it; but Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya, who had received five lakhs of *tankas*, refused to make good the sum and replied that he had given it away in charity. The Sultan was highly enraged, but he was helpless as the Shaikh was a holy man and very popular with all classes of people. Ghiyas-ud-din endeavoured to denounce him "for indulgence in the ecstatic songs and dances of darveshes, a form of devotion regarded as unlawful by rigid Sunnis of the established religion." In this policy he did not succeed, as fifty-three theologians whom he consulted on this point did not find fault with the above form of devotion. With other people, however, his policy was successful and he recovered most of the treasure squandered by Khusrav Shah.

Ghiyas-ud-din followed the policy of encouraging agriculture and protecting the cultivators. He ordered that the *Diwan-i-Wizarat* should not enhance the land revenue of any *iqta* beyond one-tenth and one-eleventh in a year. His instructions were that the enhancement should be gradual and should be spread over a number of years. The state demand was not ascertained by measurement of the land as in the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji. He gave up the practice of survey of land as it did not work satisfactorily in the hands of his officers and as it required an elaborate and technical staff. Instead, the Sultan ordered that the land revenue should be assessed by the collectors in person, which meant in practice the revival of the old sharing (*Ghalla-Bakhshi* or *Batai*) and *Nasq* or *Kankut* systems. The revenue collectors were not to be paid a commission on the sum collected by them, but by grants of land which were exempted from

taxation. In addition, they were permitted to charge a nominal fee from the cultivators. Here also Ghiyas-ud-din abandoned Ala-ud-din's scientific system and reverted to the practice that existed before the Khalji times. His next regulation was directed towards extending the area under cultivation. He believed that the cultivator should not be driven into despair and rebellion by an excessive demand and that the surest method of increasing the revenue was "the extension of cultivation, not the enhancement of the demand." This policy led to happy results. Much waste land was reclaimed and the area under cultivation was increased. Many ruined villages were repopulated. Canals were dug for irrigation and gardens were planted.

The revenue reform was followed by an attempt to improve the means of communication. Roads were cleared and works of public utility, such as, building of forts, bridges and canals, were undertaken. To Ghiyas-ud-din belongs the credit of improving the system of communication, particularly perfecting the postal system which had existed in India from time immemorial. In his time, as well as long before it, posts were carried by runners and by horsemen who were stationed at distances of two-thirds of a mile and seven or eight miles, respectively, all over the kingdom. News travelled at the rate of one hundred miles a day (twelve hours).

Ghiyas-ud-din reformed the department of justice which had fallen into decay during the weak rule of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak and Khusrav. He prohibited torture in the recovery of the State debts. This form of punishment, however, continued to be given to thieves, to revenue defaulters or to those who embezzled State money.

Ghiyas ud-din's treatment of the Hindus was not praiseworthy. He retained some of the restrictions imposed on them by Ala-ud-din Khalji. He ordered that the Hindus should not be permitted to amass wealth. They were, therefore, left with as much fruit of their labour as was necessary for them to live in moderate comfort. We are told by Zia-ud-din Barani that if the Sultan did not over-tax the Hindus it was with a view not to compel them to desert their lands and business in despair. The lot of the vast majority of the people during his reign could not have been happy.

Ghiyas-ud-din was, in his personal life, an orthodox Sunni Musalman. He was devoted to the ordinance of his faith and was

punctilious in observing its rites. He ascended the throne as a champion of orthodox Islam. It was, therefore, natural for him to behave like a fanatic. He forbade the manufacture and sale of liquor and tried to enforce the ordinances of his religion on the Muslim section of his subjects. Perhaps he was not very much of a persecutor of other faiths; but he did indulge in temple-destruction and image-breaking during the course of his campaigns.

FOREIGN POLICY

Expedition on Warangal

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq was a great annexationist. His foreign policy was directed towards reducing to submission those States which had renounced their allegiance to Delhi during the weak reign of Khusrav. But he would not stop short of their reconquest. He wanted to annex them and to bring them under the direct rule of Delhi. In 1321 he sent his heir-apparent, Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna, now entitled Ulugh Khan, to reduce Prataprudra Deva, the Kakatiya ruler of Warangal who had repudiated his vassalage to the Sultan. Ulugh Khan besieged Warangal and so harassed the ruler that he sued for peace. Ulugh Khan wanted unconditional surrender and, therefore, rejected the peace offer. Prataprudra Deva, thereupon, grew desperate and cut the lines of communication of the besiegers with the result that news from Delhi ceased to come. There arose rumours that Ghiyas-ud-din had died at Delhi. On the advice of some of his friends, such as Ubaid, the poet and the Shaikhzada of Damascus, the prince raised the siege and started for Delhi in order to be there in time to obtain possession of the throne. He was much harassed on the way by the ruler and the people of Telingana. The first Dakhin expedition of the prince was, therefore, a failure.

Second expedition to Warangal

Reaching Devagiri Jauna Khan learnt that the news of his father's death was false. So he travelled quickly to Delhi and apologised to his father for the mistake that he had committed. He was forgiven; but his associates and the Sultan's enemies were put to death. In 1323 the prince was again sent to Warangal. This time he arranged to see that his lines of communication remained safe so as to ensure a regular flow of news from Delhi. The prince captured

Bidar and then marched on Warangal. This time the siege was prosecuted with such vigour that Prataprudra Deva and his family and nobles fell into the hands of the victors. The raja was sent to Delhi. Telingana was occupied and was divided into districts which were allotted to Turkish nobles and officers. The capital city of Warangal was named Sultanpur and it became the capital of a province of the Sultanate of Delhi.

Raid on Utkala

While on his way back to Delhi from Telingana, prince Jauna undertook a raid into the kingdom of Utkala in Orissa (Jajnagar of Muslim writers), where he captured fifty elephants besides other valuable articles. He returned to Delhi laden with rich spoils and treasures from Telingana and Utkala.

Rebellion in Bangal

There was a dispute for the throne of Bangal between the three brothers, Ghiyas-ud-din, Shihab-ud-din and Nasir-ud-din. Ghiyas-ud-din, who was governor of East Bangal, overthrew Shihab-ud-din and occupied the throne of Lakhanauti in 1319. Their third brother, Nasir-ud-din, who, too, was eager to rule over Bangal, appealed to Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq for help. The Sultan responded and proceeded in person towards Bangal. On the way at Tirhut he was joined by Nasir-ud-din, and the Sultan despatched one of his capable officers, Zafar Khan, to Lakhanauti. Ghiyas-ud-din of Bangal was defeated and taken a prisoner. Nasir-ud-din was reinstated on the throne of West Bangal as a vassal of Delhi. East Bangal was annexed to Delhi. After these arrangements the Sultan returned with a large booty.

On his way back from Bangal Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq attacked Raja Har Singh Deva of Tirhut (Mithila) as the loyalty of this Hindu ruler was doubtful. He reduced him to submission and proceeded to Delhi by quick marches.

The Mongol invasion

In 1324, when prince Jauna Khan was absent in the Dakhin, the Mongols invaded northern India; but they were defeated. The Mongol leaders were captured and brought to Delhi. We do not hear of any other Mongol invasion during the reign of this king.

Death of Ghiyas-ud-din

While occupied in Bangal, the Sultan received disquieting news

of prince Jauna Khan's behaviour in Delhi. It is said that he was increasing the number of his followers in order to have a powerful party of his own. He had also become a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya who was on bad terms with his father and was reported to have made a prophecy that the prince would very soon become king of Delhi. Some astrologers had also prophesied that Ghiyas-ud-din would never return to Delhi. These reports enraged the Sultan who threatened Jauna Khan with his displeasure and proceeded back to Delhi by forced marches. Nizam-ud-din Auliya, who was similarly threatened, is said to have replied : "Delhi is yet far off" (*hunuz Delhi dur ast*). Prince Jauna Khan erected a wooden pavilion at Afghanpur, a village six miles to the south-east of Delhi, to accord reception to his father. It is said that "the building was so designed as to fall when touched in a certain part by the elephants ....." The prince entertained his father under the pavilion, and, when the meal was over, he requested his father to let him have a view of the elephants that he had brought from Bangal. The Sultan agreed. The elephants were brought out and paraded. As soon as they came into contact with that part of the building which had been designed to bring about its collapse, the entire pavilion fell and Ghiyas-ud-din, along with his second son, prince Mahmud Khan, was crushed. Jauna Khan is said to have purposely delayed ordering the diggers to remove the debris. When the debris were removed, the Sultan was found bent over the body of his favourite son, Mahmud Khan, as if to protect him.

Historians are divided in their opinion regarding prince Jauna Khan's complicity in the affairs. Dr. Mahdi Husain says that the pavilion fell of its own accord and that the prince had no hand in the matter. Sir Woolsely Haig and Dr. Ishwari Prasad, on the other hand, maintain that the whole thing was the result of a plot cleverly engineered by the prince. The latter view seems to be correct, as it is based on the statement of the famous African traveller, Ibn Battuta, who derived his information from Shaikh Rukn-ud-din who was present in the pavilion at that time but had been asked by prince Jauna Khan to leave for his prayers just before the elephants were brought out to be paraded before the building.

Estimate of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq

At the time of his accession, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq was an experienced soldier and a seasoned general. He had also had the

reputation of being a loyal and faithful official and a successful warden of the marches. He was possessed of almost all the qualities a good ruler should have. He established peace and order in the kingdom and stamped out theft, robbery and brigandage. By his policy of moderation, he conciliated the old nobility and won over most of the halfhearted supporters of Khusrav. He seems to have been the first Sultan of Delhi to take a correct view of the position of the agriculturists, as he believed that the prosperity of the State depended upon the wellbeing of the tillers of the soil. That was why he issued instructions that revenue officers should do their best to extend the area under cultivation rather than to increase the rates of the land tax. He followed the middle course with regard to the hereditary official class in the department of revenue, namely, *muqaddams*, *khuts* and *chaudharis*. Hence his reign was marked by some kind of material prosperity of the people.

Tughluq Shah was careful about the administration of justice. He held his daily court twice, that is, morning and evening, and endeavoured to maintain the prestige of the Sultanate. He also believed in the policy of military domination. Some of the modern writers have called him a mild and benevolent ruler. But this is not a correct description of his character. He was mild and generous to his courtiers and former friends and colleagues for whom his elevation to the throne brought no change so far as his attitude towards them was concerned. But for the common people, particularly the Hindus, he was fairly strict. He also pursued the policy of aggressive warfare against his Hindu neighbours.

Ghiyas-ud-din paid special attention to the army. He kept the military machine in proper trim and retained Ala-ud-din's reforms, such as taking down of the descriptive rolls of the soldiers and the branding of the horses. He was a rigid Sunni Musalman and, though not bitterly hostile to the religion of the vast majority of his subjects, he was surely not sympathetic towards it.

Ghiyas-ud-din was fond of buildings. Early in his reign he laid the foundation of a big palace-fort which became known as Tughluqabad. Within the enclosure of this building were erected his palaces and other buildings. His main palace was built of gilded bricks which shone so brilliantly in the sun that none could gaze steadily upon it. Ibn Battuta relates that the Sultan had his treasure-rooms in one of which there was a cistern into which molten gold was poured so that it

became one solid mass. He was, also, a patron of learning and had scholars and poets at his court.

MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHLUQ, 1325—1351

His early career

The eldest son of a frontier governor, Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna Khan had been brought up as a soldier. Even as a boy he must have distinguished himself in this profession. From his ability as a scholar, when he was in the prime of his life, it is clear that he must have been given the best possible literary eduation in his boyhood and he must have been a precocious child. The first important office that he held was that of the master of the horse under Khusrav Shah. Fakhr-ud-din was an extremely ambitious youth who saw the possibility of his reaching the throne of Delhi. To realise this object he set foot on agitation against Khusrav, his patron, who had endeavoured to placate him; and his father, Ghazi Tughluq, seems to have acted simply on the advice and initiative of his more clever and ambitious son. His opportunities came when his father became the Sultan of Delhi in 1329. He was nominated heir-apparent and given the title of Ulugh Khan. In 1321, he undertook an expedition to Warangal which failed disastrously. Two years later, he was again sent to reduce Prataprudra Deva to submission. This time he succeeded in defeating the ruler of Warangal and bringing him a prisoner to Delhi. Early in 1325 he brought about his father's death, probably because he would not wait but wanted to anticipate the course of nature. Four years before that date he had believed in the rumours of his father's death and had almost carried out his accession. These facts show beyond doubt that he was an over-ambitious and unscrupulous youth. He believed in his ability and wisdom and thought that he would do better as a ruler than any of his predecessors.

His accession

After Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq's death in February or March, 1325, Ulugh Khan sat upon the throne under the title of Muhammad Tughluq. For forty days he remained at Tughluqabad, after which he marched in state to the city of Delhi and took his seat on the throne in the Red Palace of Balban. The capital city was well decorated for his reception. The king threw gold and silver coins among the populace. His accession was well received by the people

and there was no revolution and no opposition. People seem to have expected great things from him and he, too, seems to have been confident of doing better than the previous Sultans of Delhi.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Revenue reforms, 1326-27

Muhammad was a very diligent ruler. Soon after his accession he issued numerous ordinances for the improvement of the administration of revenue. The first ordinance was for the compilation of a register of the revenue and expenditure of the provinces of his kingdom. He directed the governors of the provinces to send to the capital all relevant records and other materials for its compilation. Summaries of income and expenditure came to Delhi from distant parts of the empire, like the Dakhin, Bangal and Gujarat, and the work proceeded smoothly. The Sultan seems to have undertaken this labour in order to introduce a uniform standard of land revenue and to see that no village remained unassessed.

Taxation in the Doab

His next measure was to increase taxation in the Doab with a view to augment his resources. Probably he wanted to raise the revenue by five to ten per cent, not by increasing the land tax but by certain other taxes. Probably these taxes were the house tax and the grazing tax. We are told by a later, though standard, authority that in order to realise these taxes the houses of the people in the rural areas were numbered and their cattle were branded. He attempted to realise the land revenue and the newly imposed taxes with rigour. Unfortunately, when the policy of additional taxation was enforced in the Doab, there occurred a famine owing to the failure of rains. The people offered resistance. The Sultan's officers continued realising the taxes. The cultivators had, therefore, to abandon their lands and take to highway robbery. Muhammad bin Tughluq made an attempt to help the cultivators by giving them loans to buy seed, bullocks, etc., and making arrangements for the digging of wells for irrigation, but the policy failed. In the first place, it was too late to have introduced the grant of loans. Secondly, as people had nothing to eat, they utilised the loans for purposes different from those for which they were intended. Thirdly, the house and grazing taxes had been unpopular since they were introduced by Ala-ud-din Khalji. As they had been allowed to fall into disuse under Ala-ud-din's suc-

cessors, their revival by Muhammad was very much resented. The Sultan got no extra revenue. In fact, even the usual revenue could not be realised from the Doab. Worst of it all, the Sultan himself became thoroughly unpopular with his subjects.

Creation of agriculture department

The next experiment of Muhammad Tughluq was the creation of the department of agriculture. It was called *Diwan-i-Kohi*. The main object of this department was to bring the uncultivated land under cultivation by giving direct financial support from the state treasury. A large tract of land, sixty miles square in area, was first chosen for this purpose. The land was cultivated and different crops in rotation were sown. The government spent over seventy lakhs on the scheme in two years' time. The land was distributed among those who were in the need of it and a large staff of officers and guards was appointed to look after it. But the experiment failed for several reasons. Firstly, the piece of land chosen for the experiment was not fertile. Secondly, the experiment was altogether new with no precedent and, therefore, required great attention from the Sultan himself which he could not give. Thirdly, three years were inadequate to yield any tangible result. Fourthly, the money earmarked for the purpose was badly spent; part of it was misappropriated by corrupt officials and a part was spent by the people on their personal needs. The experiment, which was one of the best in the history of the revenue administration in the country, had, therefore, to be abandoned.

Transfer of the capital, 1326-27

An important political experiment of Muhammad was the transfer of the capital from Delhi to Devagiri which was renamed Daultabad. Several reasons led to this fateful decision. The first was that the Sultan was anxious to have a capital which should not only be situated at a strategic place but should also be in the centre of his far-flung kingdom. Muhammad was impressed by Devagiri, and we are told by Barani that the geographical importance of the place was one of the reasons for its selection as the metropolis. As he writes : "This place held a central situation; Delhi, Gujarat, Lakhanauti, Satgaon, Sonargaon, Telang, Malabar, Dwarasamudra and Kampil were about equidistant from thence....." Secondly, Delhi was too near the north-western frontier which was constantly

threatened by Mongol raids, while the Sultan wanted the new capital to be at a safe distance from the invaders from the north-west. Thirdly, while northern India had almost been conquered and pacified, the Dakhin was a new and uneasy partner in the Sultanate. It could be effectively subdued and managed by a government that had its headquarters in southern India. Lastly, he must surely have felt that southern India was so rich and that he would be able to utilise its resources more easily and effectively by an intimate contact with it. Ibn Battuta gives another reason, namely, that Muhammad was disgusted with the citizens of Delhi who had written anonymous letters full of abuse and he undertook the transfer of the capital in order to punish them. Curiously enough, this tale has been accepted by a great historian like Woolseley Haig. It is impossible to imagine that so serious a measure could have been decided on so frivolous a ground.

Having decided the measure, Muhammad ordered the transfer of the capital and also the people of Delhi, men, women and children, to Daultabad with all their belongings. The people would not like to leave Delhi which had been endeared to them by long association; but Muhammad was bent upon taking all the inhabitants with him. Ibn Battuta tells us that he caused a search to be made and a blind man and a cripple were found in the city unwilling to leave. It is said that the cripple was put to death, while the blind man was ordered to be dragged to Daultabad with the result that only one of his legs reached the new capital. The Sultan had a look over the deserted town from his palace and was satisfied to see that there came no smoke from the chimney or the kitchen of a single house. These stories are nothing more than bazar gossip.

The Sultan made commendable arrangements for the comfort of the people during their journey from Delhi to Daultabad. It is said, temporary huts were set up along the seven hundred mile road and free food and drink were supplied. Shady trees were also said to have been planted; but these could have hardly afforded any shelter to the travellers, for they could not have grown up in such a short time. The people suffered tremendously from fatigue, privation and mental agony. Many of them died on the way and many after reaching their destination.

The scheme was a complete failure, not because the transfer of the capital was undesirable and without precendent and should

not have been undertaken, but because the Sultan failed to see that the only desirable thing to do was to shift the court. Courtiers, officers and big merchants and traders would themselves have sooner or later accompanied the court to Daultabad. It was unnecessary to order the transfer of the whole population bag and baggage. Secondly, the Sultan did not realise that people would not abandon their homes and hearth except in extreme and unavoidable circumstances. The people of Delhi, who loved their city as their ancestral abode, were no exception to this rule. Thirdly, the Muslim population of Delhi was unwilling to live in Hindu surroundings in the Dakhin. Fourthly, Delhi was, without doubt, a better place for the capital of India than Daultabad which could not have successfully controlled distant provinces like Bangal or the Panjab. Above all, it was very difficult, if not impossible, for the government to resist the Mongols and protect the north-western frontier of the country from their attacks from Daultabad. Hence Muhammad committed a twofold mistake, namely, wrong choice of the place and wrong method of bringing about the transfer.

In fairness to the Sultan, it must be added that as soon as he saw that the scheme had failed, he ordered the people to return from Daultabad to their homes in Delhi. But Daultabad now became a deserted town, while Delhi was only partially repopulated. It did not regain its former prosperity for years to come.

The introduction of token currency, 1329-30

The reign of Muhammad Tughluq is an important landmark in the history of Indian coinage. He has been called 'a prince of moneyers'. He reformed the entire system of coinage, fixed the relative values of the precious metals and issued various types of coins. Most of these coins were noted for their artistic design and execution. His most notable experiment in the field was the introduction of token currency. There were several reasons for introducing brass and copper coinage. Firstly, there was the want of precious money in the treasury which had been drained by wars and rebellions and also by costly experiments in the field of administration. Secondly, owing to famine and harsh taxation policy in the Doab, there was a considerable fall in the Sultan's revenue. Thirdly, he was anxious to augment his revenues in order to undertake the conquest of the distant provinces of India and of some foreign countries. Fourthly, Muhammad was fond of experimentation and, therefore,

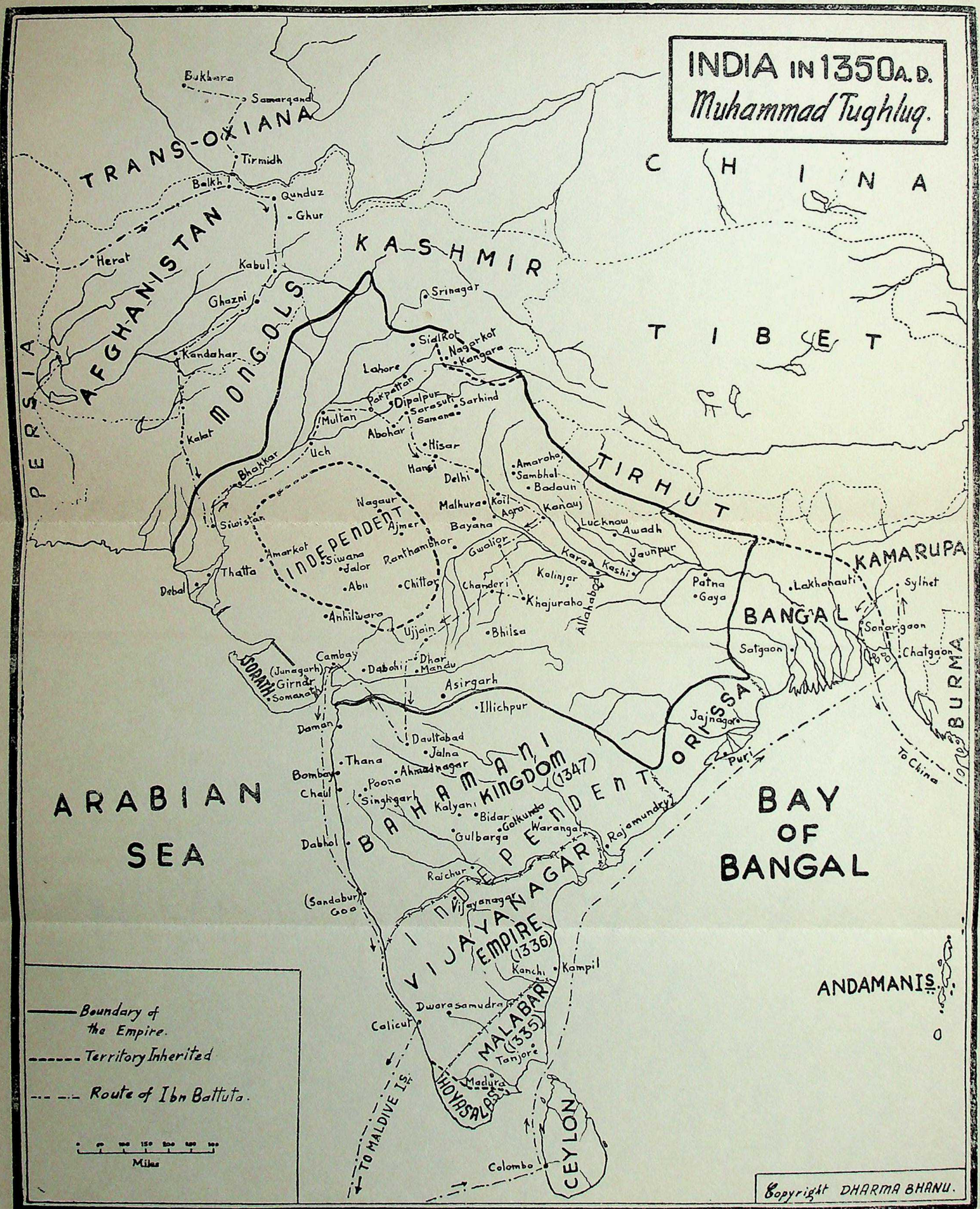
wanted to open a new chapter in the history of coinage in India. Fifthly, he was encouraged by the examples of Chinese and Persian rulers before him who had introduced token currency in their countries in the thirteenth century.

With the above objects in view, Muhammad promulgated an order making copper coins the legal tender and putting these coins on par (in value) with gold and silver coins. He ordered that the people should use these coins in all transactions just like gold and silver coins; but he took no steps to make the mint the monopoly of the State. Those days, in make and design and in execution and finish, the coins turned out by the royal mint were not such that they could not be easily imitated by private persons. And as the Sultan made no arrangement for preventing the circulation of counterfeit coins, private persons began to manufacture copper coins. Barani says in right orthodox Muslim fashion that the house of every Hindu became a mint. There is no reason to believe that Musalmans resisted the temptation to which, according to Barani, the Hindus succumbed. People hoarded gold and silver coins and paid their revenues in the new ones. Foreign merchants purchased Indian commodities with the token currency in the country, but refused to accept the latter while selling foreign products. Trade came to a standstill. Business was very much hampered, and gold and silver became scarce. The result was a great confusion and the Sultan was bewildered to see his scheme crumbling down before his very eyes. He was compelled to withdraw the token currency and to order the people to take from the royal treasury gold and silver pieces in exchange for brass and copper coins. The State was, thus, defrauded, while private people made huge profits at its expense.

The failure of the scheme was due not so much to the backwardness of the people and their prejudice and ignorance (though they failed to appreciate it) as to the failure on the part of the Sultan to prevent the manufacture of counterfeit coins by private individuals and their circulation in the market. It was a mistake on the part of Muhammad to have failed to appreciate the limitation and circumstances of the age. He must be, therefore, primarily held responsible for the failure of the scheme.

Policy towards Church

With the example of Ala-ud-din before him, Muhammad ignored the *shariat* (Canon law) and "to base his political conduct on reason."


INDIA IN 1350 A.D.
Muhammad Tughluq.
TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
Tirmidh
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
AFGHANISTAN
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Kalat
PERSIA
MONGOLS
KASHMIR
Srinagar
CHINA
TIBET
Sialkot
Nagarkot
Kangara
Lahore
Pakpattan
Dipalpur
Sarsuti
Sarhind
Samana
Multan
Abohar
Uch
Bhakkar
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
TIRHUT
Amaroha
Sambhal
Badaun
Kanauj
Agra
Koil
Malkura
Bayana
Lucknow
Awadh
Jaunpur
Kara
Kashi
Patna
Gaya
KAMARUPA
Lakhanauti
Sylhet
BANGAL
Sonargaon
Satgaon
Chatgaon
BURMA
To China
Siwistan
Nagaur
Ajmer
INDEPENDENT
Amarkot
Siwana
Jalor
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Kalinjar
Chanderi
Khajuraho
Allahabad
Thatta
Debal
Abu
Chittor
Ahhilwara
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Cambay
Dabohi
Dhar
Mandu
SORATH
(Junagarh)
Girnar
Somanath
Asirgarh
Illichpur
Daman
Daulatabad
Jalna
Thana
Ahmadnagar
Bombay
Poona
Chaul
Singhgarh
BAHAMANI KINGDOM (1347)
Kalyani
Bidar
Golkunda
Gulbarga
Warangal
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Raichur
INDEPENDENT
Vijayanagar
(Sandabur)
Goa
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE (1336)
Kanchi
Kampil
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
MALABAR (1335)
Tanjore
Madura
HOYSALAS
TO MALDIVE IS.
Colombo
CEYLON
ORISSA
Jajnagar
Puri
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
ANDAMANIS
Boundary of the Empire.
Territory Inherited
Route of Ibn Battuta.
Miles
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He decided that in administrative and political matters secular considertions alone must prevail. This brought him into clash with the *ulema* who had all through, except during the reign of Ala-uddin, influenced the state policy. But the Sultan did not really intend to defy the *shariat*. He consulted theologians on all important matters, but accepted their advice only when it appealed to reason and expediency. He deprived the theologians of the monopoly of administration of justice. He overruled the judgment of the qazis whenever he found it defective. He appointed some non-theologians to judicial posts. Whenever the *ulema* were found guilty of rebellion, sedition or embezzlement of religious funds, the Sultan inflicted upon them severe punishments. Shaikhs and Sayyids were not immune from the rule of law. The result of the policy was that domination of the *ulema* in political and administrative affairs of the State came to an end. But this earned for the Sultan great unpopularity with Muslim divines.

Like Balban, Muhammad believed that the Sultan was the "Shadow of God". His coins bore the expression, "*Al Sultan Zilli Allah*" (Sultan, the shadow of God). Through his coins he endeavoured to convey to the people the importance of the king's majesty. On some of his coins we come across verses like : "Sovereignty is not conferred upon every man, but is placed on the elect," "He who obeys the Sultan truly obeys God," "The Sultan is the shadow of God," and "God is the supporter of the Sultan." He dropped all reference to the Khilafat, though he did not assume the title of Khalifa.

Inspite of his justice, generosity and personal ability, the Sultan found that he was getting more and more unpopular. Thinking that the disaffection of the people might be due to his ignoring the Muslim law, he reversed during the later part of his reign his policy towards the Khilafat. He implored the Khalifa of Egypt to confirm him as the Sultan of Delhi. He removed his own name from the coins and inserted that of the Khalifa. All royal orders were issued not in the name of the Sultan, but in that of the Khalifa. In 1340, the Sultan invited the beggarly descendant of the Khalifa of Egypt, named Ghiyas-ud-din Muhammad, showed him the utmost servility and respect and presented to him extremely costly gifts. But even this did not restore Muhammad's popularity, which caused him great worry; but there was no help.

Muhammad was by nature a man of liberal disposition and broad outlook on life. He was not intolerant to the religion of the vast majority of his subjects. He employed some of them on fairly important posts. The contemporary Muslim historians who have indulged in unqualified praise for the policy of religious persecution of the Hindus by Muhammad's predecessors on the throne of Delhi have no comment to make about this ruler's attitude towards his non-Muslim subjects except to blame him for his generosity.

FOREIGN POLICY

Plan for the conquest of Khurasan

Like Ala-ud-din, Muhammad Tughluq was ambitious of conquering countries beyond the borders of India. Early during his reign he formed the design of conquering Khurasan, Iran and Trans-Oxiana. The Khurasan project was due to the instigation of some Khurasani nobles who had been attracted to the Sultan's court by his lavish generosity. A huge army, numbering three lakhs and seventy thousand men, was collected and was paid one year's salary in advance. But the project could not be undertaken and the army had to be dispersed. It was found that such a huge force could not be maintained for long without unduly straining the resources of the state. It was not an easy affair to cross the huge snowbound mountains that lay between India and Khurasan and to fight the hostile people inhabiting the intervening lands. Moreover, the political condition of Khurasan had taken a turn for the better. So the project was given up.

Conquest of Nagarkot, 1337

The fort of Nagarkot situated on a hill in the Kangra district in the Panjab had defied Turkish army since the time of Mahmud of Ghazni. Inspite of the conquest of almost the whole of India by Ala-ud-din Khalji, that fort had remained in the hands of a Hindu prince. In 1337 Muhammad undertook an expedition against it. The raja offered resistance, but he had to submit and the fort was restored to him.

Qarajal expedition, 1337-38

Muhammad was desirous of establishing his authority over the Himalayan states which had not so far been reduced to submission. Hence he led an expedition to Qarajal which was situated in the

Kamaun hills at a distance of ten days' journey from Delhi. The huge Delhi army attacked the Hindu stronghold, but it suffered greatly owing to the mountainous nature of the country and heavy rainfall. The Sultan was, therefore, obliged to retire; but he succeeded in compelling the chief to pay him an indemnity. Some modern writers have described the Qarajal expedition as an unsuccessful adventure to conquer China and Western Tibet. This view is incorrect, as no contemporary authority has made any mention of Muhammad's desire to conquer China or Tibet.

Relations with China

Muhammad had cordial relations with some of the Asian countries, particularly China. The Chinese emperor, Toghan Timur, sent an envoy to Delhi in 1341 seeking Muhammad's permission to rebuild Buddhist temples in the Himalayan region. These Himalayan temples were demolished by Muhammad's soldiers during his Qarajal expedition. The Sultan sent Ibn Battuta as an envoy to the court of the Mongol emperor of China. Ibn Battuta started in July 1342, and returned in 1347. As regards the temples, Muhammad replied that according to the laws of Islam permission could not be given for their reconstruction unless *jizya* was paid.

Mongol invasions, 1328-29

The north-western frontier of the Sultanate was threatened by a series of Mongol invasions which occurred after Muhammad had ordered the transfer of his capital to Daultabad. At the head of a powerful army, the Mongol chief, named Tarma Shirin, entered the frontier and ravaged the country from Multan and Lahore to the vicinity of Delhi. The Sultan was taken by surprise. He had neglected the frontier. There was no capable warden of the marches to resist the invaders. It seems that the Mongol chief was bribed and persuaded to retire. This was a very unwise policy. It exposed the weakness of Muhammad's administration and showed that the policy of resistance followed by Balban and Ala-ud-din was given up.

Rebellions

Muhammad Tughluq's reign was disturbed by numerous rebellions. These may be divided into two categories : (a) early rebellions, and (b) later rebellions.

Early rebellions. The early rebellions were due not to the

failure of Muhammad's domestic policy, but to the ambitious designs of certain important chiefs. The first rebellion was that of the Sultan's cousin, Bha-ud-din Gursasp, governor of Sagar near Gulbarga. He was defeated in 1327 and flayed alive. The second rebellion was that of the Hindu chief of Kondhana (modern Singhgarh near Poona). He was defeated and compelled to become a vassal of Delhi. The third rebellion was that of Bahram Aiba of Multan who held, besides Multan, Uch and Sindh. He, too, was defeated and put to death.

Later rebellions. The later rebellions, which were too many, were caused by the Sultan's oppressive policy of increasing taxes and by his ruthless punishments inflicted upon the people. Certain others were due to the transfer of capital and the policy of the currency reforms which made Muhammad unpopular and instigated ambitious men to take advantages of his difficulties.

(1) In 1335 Sayyid Jalal-ud-din Ahsan rebelled in Ma'abar (the eastern coast of southern India with its capital at Madura). Although Muhammad proceeded in person to southern India, the rebel could not be put down. Ma'abar became independent.

(2) Amir Hulaju, governor of Lahore, was the next powerful notable to rebel. He was, however, defeated and killed.

(3) Malik Hushang, son of the governor of Daultabad, revolted in 1335-36, but later he submitted and was pardoned.

(4) Bangal took advantage of the unpopularity of Muhammad. The Sultan sent an army which defeated and killed Ghiyas-ud-din of Bangal (1330-31). A little later there occurred a dispute among certain powerful notables in that province. One of them, Ali Mubarak, appealed to Delhi for help, but received none. So he proclaimed himself king of Lakhanauti. That province was, thus, lost to Delhi.

(5) The next to rebel was the governor of Kara, named Nizam Ma'in. He was, however, defeated and flayed alive in 1337-38.

(6) In 1338-39 came the turn of Nasrat Khan, governor of Bidar. He was defeated, made to submit and deprived of his fief.

(7) Ali Shah rebelled at Gulbarga in 1339-40. He was defeated and banished to Ghazni.

(8) One of the most formidable rebellions was that of Ain-ul-mulk Multani, governor of Awadh. Ain-ul-muik was probably one of the topmost living nobles and officers. He had held impor-

tant offices since the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji and played a prominent part in the history of his time. He was a highly learned scholar and was well versed in theology and jurisprudence. He subsequently wrote a book, entitled *Munshat-i-Mahru* or *Insha-i-Mahru* which gives a good account of the administration of Firoz Tughluq. He was one of the few important men who could wield their sword and pen with equal facility. He was transferred by Muhammad from Awadh to Daultabad in 1340-41. Ain-ul-mulk was made to believe that his transfer was preliminary step towards his destruction. So he revolted. But he was defeated and taken a prisoner. He was dismissed from his post and subjected to indignities. But as the Sultan was convinced that he was a half-hearted rebel, he spared his life.

(9) Shahu Afghan was another rebel who killed the governor of Multan and occupied the city. Muhammad himself proceeded to punish him. Shahu fled to the hills.

(10) The next rebellion occurred in Sunam and Samana. The Sultan undertook an expedition to those places and defeated the chiefs—Jats and Bhatti Rajputs. After this success he brought to Delhi the rebel leaders and forcibly converted them to Islam.

Foundation of the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar

(11) The widespread rebellions gave an opportunity to the Hindus of southern India to make a bid for their independence. An enterprising Hindu leader, named Harihar, laid the foundation of the kingdom of Vijayanagar in 1336. He gave secret support to Krishna Nayak who rebelled against the Sultan of Delhi in 1343-44. This rebellion could not be suppressed and a large part of southern India passed into the hands of the Hindus.

(12) The people of Devagiri rebelled in 1345 owing to the extortions and harsh treatment of the local officers. The historian, Farishta, writes that the people "rebelled in all quarters and the country was devastated and depopulated in consequence."

(13) Next in importance came the rebellion of the foreign nobles, known as *Amiran-i-Sadah* (Centurians) who had enjoyed certain special privileges. These foreign nobles embezzled money, aided other rebels and took to plunder whenever there was any confusion in the Dakhin. Muhammad instructed Aziz Khummar, governor of Malwa, to punish the foreign nobles. Aziz treacherously put to death a number of them. This caused dissatisfaction among

the foreign nobles in Gujarat who, too, raised the standard of rebellion. They captured Aziz and put him to death. Muhammad had to proceed to the scene of action. He defeated the rebels near Dabohi. This success was able to put down the *Amir-i-Sadah*.

(14) The foreign nobles at Devagiri became apprehensive of their fate. They rebelled and occupied Devagiri. From there the trouble spread to Berar, Khandesh and Malwa. The Sultan had to proceed to Devagiri and to put down the rebellion. Meanwhile, there was another rebellion in Gujarat and Muhammad had to proceed there. This gave the rebels of Devagiri a chance. They repudiated allegiance to Delhi and laid the foundation of the Bahamani kingdom.

(15) The rebellion in Gujarat proved to be formidable. The Sultan, however, hunted down the rebel, named Taghi, who was compelled to take shelter at Thatta in Sindh. Muhammad remained in Gujarat for three years in order to reorganise the administration of the province and conquer Girnar, that is, modern Junagarh. After this, he proceeded to Sindh to punish Taghi, and there he was taken ill. He died on March 20, 1351. In the words of the historian, Badauni, "The king was freed from his people and they from the king."

His character and estimate

No character in our medieval history has aroused so much interest and controversy as that of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Contemporary historians, like Barani and Ibn Battuta, who came into intimate contact with him, have expressed opposite views about his personality and his virtues and faults. Modern European writers have passed diametrically opposite judgments on the character and achievements of the Sultan. Elphinstone, for example, expressed doubt "whether he was not affected by some degree of insanity." Havell, Edward Thomas and Smith have dittoed Elphinstone. Gardiner Brown, on the other hand, has painted Muhammad in bright colours and exonerated him from the charges of madness, blood-thirstiness and that of being a visionary. We have two monographs on the reign of this Sultan from the pen of two of our scholars. Yet the controversy is not stilled and the subject continues to exercise the minds of writers and thinkers as usual.

As a private gentleman, Muhammad's character leaves nothing to be desired. Endowed with a keen intellect, a marvellous memory

and an inordinate thirst for learning, he was a profound scholar of logic, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and the physical sciences, besides Persian literature and poetry. Adept in the art of expression, composition as well as speech, he was also a noted dialectician. He loved calligraphy and fine arts, specially music, was a patron of letters and arts and loved the company of learned men.

Muhammad's personal life was marked by a high standard of morality. He was free from the prevailing vices of the age. By nature he was one of the humblest of men. Both Barani and Ibn Battuta bestow high praise on him for his generosity and tell us that the Sultan was profuse in the distribution of gifts, presents and rewards. He seems to have been an affectionate relation and a good friend as is testified by his fondness for his cousin, Firoz, and regard for Barani and other friends. Inspite of the charge of irreligiousness, it is clear from a perusal of Ibn Battuta that Muhammad had faith in morality and was devoted to his religion. He was regular and punctilious in the five daily prayers and fasts enjoined by Islam. By habit and inclination Muhammad was diligent. In fact, his application to the details of administration and his perseverance had become proverbial. He was brought up as a soldier. As an experienced general he had fought battles. Historians are unanimous in their praise for his love of military activity.

As was to be expected from a man of his profound learning and wide range of interest, Muhammad was possessed of a liberal disposition and catholicity of taste. Inspite of his devotion to Islam, he was not intolerant and was ready to appreciate merit in men of diverse faiths and positions in life.

But, when judged as a ruler and administrator, Muhammad must be pronounced a failure. In fact, his achievements, during his long reign of twenty-six years, were negative. He inherited a vast kingdom which embraced not only practically the whole of northern India but also the Dakhin. Before he closed his eyes in death, the Sultanate of Delhi was considerably reduced in size. The Dakhin was lost. Bangal severed its connection. Sindh, too, was slipping away from his grasp when death overtook him. Even in the provinces that still formed part of the Turkish kingdom, rebellion and strife were rife. His experience and reputation as a soldier and general failed him in the hour of his trial. He was out to conquer countries beyond the frontiers of India; he lost a considerable portion

of what was his at the time of his accession. Muhammad's ambition was to remodel the administration and to place the revenue administration and the currency system on a scientific basis. One of his cherished desires was to have a capital situated in the centre of his dominion. All these projects came to naught. Nay, they caused a considerable reaction and alienated the people beyond measure. Long before his death, he almost confessed his failure. "I visit them (people) with chastisement," he said to the historian Barani, "upon the suspicion or presumption of their rebellious and treacherous designs, and I punish the most trifling act of contumacy with death. This I will do until I die, or until the people act honestly, and give up rebellion and contumacy. I have no such *wazir* as will make rules to obviate my shedding blood. I punish the people because they have all at once become my enemies and opponents. I have dispensed great wealth among them, but they have not become friendly and loyal." What else could this mean except the confession of one who was conscious of his failure ?

Some modern writers are of opinion that Muhammad was not responsible for his failure as a ruler; he failed because circumstances were against him, because people were backward and prejudiced and, also, because the Muslim *ulema* turned against him for his policy of setting aside their interference in state affairs and punishing them for going against his orders. There is some point in the above contention; but Muhammad's failure was chiefly due to his limitations and to certain grave defects in his character. He lacked balance, practical judgment and commonsense. He was obsessed with theoretical learning and his knowledge was bookish and was not derived from actual experience in life. He was not endowed with the royal gift of judging human character and lacked the power of inspiring confidence in men and getting on with his colleagues. It was his hobby to propound lofty theories and visionary projects. Seldom did he care to think out his schemes in detail. They were sound on paper; but, when reduced to practice, they came to nothing. Muhammad had no patience either with men or with institutions, including his own lofty projects. By character and habit he could not persevere on, but would give up a project without seeing its end. He was, without doubt, over-hasty. Possessed of a violent temper, he would easily get annoyed. Once angry, he would lose his balance and would never attempt to see the other side of a problem. He

had no discrimination in the awarding of punishment and would inflict the penalty of death for a petty crime as well as for a heinous offence. Being sensitive, he imagined that the people were, without reason and inspite of his generosity, against him and so they must be punished. These were, therefore, the main causes of his failure. If the people were backward he should have attempted like a wise and practical statesman to take them with him in his projected reforms. What was after all the use of introducing schemes which were too ahead of the age and incomprehensible to his subjects for whose benefit they were intended ? Generally speaking, circumstances were not against him. When he ascended the throne, he was cordially welcomed by the people; but as he persisted in his wild schemes, such as, raising the taxes in the Doab in the midst of a famine, it was but natural for the people to offer resistance. It seems too much to say that he failed because of ill-luck and that he should be styled as an ill-starred monarch.

Was he mad ?

Elphinstone was the first historian who believed that Muhammad suffered from some degree of insanity. His views have been shared by later European writers. A perusal of the contemporary authorities shows that there is nothing in the pages of Barani and Ibn Battuta which might show that the Sultan ever suffered from any kind of madness. Probably, Elphinstone and other European writers were misled by the statement of Barani and Ibn Battuta that there were always some dead bodies found lying in front of the Sultan's palace. Muhammad inflicted the punishment of death for petty offences not because he was mad but because he could make no discrimination between crime and crime. The mistake was due to the lack of a sense of proportion rather than to mental insanity. It must also be said in fairness to the Sultan that punishment of death was common in the medieval age both in Europe and in Asia. It is also incorrect to say that Muhammad delighted in shedding human blood. The charge was brought against him by Barani, who belonged to the clerical party which was particularly hostile to the Sultan for his policy of depriving them of their privileges and chastising them for their failings and presumptions.

The charge of atheism is also untenable. Barani says that the Sultan had lost faith in Islam and acted against its tenets, while Ibn Battuta definitely asserts that he was very meticulous in his daily

prayers and other religious rites enjoined by Islam. Not only did he adhere strictly to the dogma, percept and practice of his religion but he punished those who deviated from them, and even those who did not say their prayers regularly. The truth was that in the early stage of his career Muhammad was assailed by doubts and, hence, he acted as a sceptic. But, some years after his accesion, he gave up scepticism and behaved like an orthodox Sunni Musalman.

There is another charge against Muhammad, namely, that of his being a visionary. There is some substance in the contention that he was fond of building castles in the air and that he thought of schemes which failed in operation. But one should not forget that many of his projects and reforms, such as the currency and revenue reforms, were, on the other hand, sound, constructive and practicable. Some of them even showed "flashes of political insight." Hence, Muhammad was both an idealist and a visionary.

Was he a mixture of opposites ?

Dr. Ishwari Prasad maintains that only when viewed superficially Muhammad appears to be an "amazing compound of contradictions," but he was really not so. Dr. Mahdi Husain endeavours to show that though he had contradictory qualities in him, these appeared at different periods of his career and that there were clear reasons behind them. Hence, Dr. Husain contends that he could not be called a mixture of opposites. The present writer differs from the above learned historians and believes that Muhammad did possess contradictory qualities at one and the same period of his career and that these remained part and parcel of his character throughout his life. Dr. Mahdi Husain has shown that the Sultan was sceptic in the early days of his reign, but became really religious in his later years. This would show that so far as religion was concerned, the Sultan could not be called guilty of being religious and irreligious at one and the same time. But Dr. Husain is silent so far as the other qualities are concerned. Muhammad was humble and, at the same time, extremely arrogant, so that, as Barani writes, he would not like to be told that there was any part of the world or heaven which was not under his control. At times, he was so moderate and servile that Ibn Battuta considered humility to be the most important trait of his character. Usually, he was extremely generous; but, at times, he was thoroughly narrowminded. Ibn

Battuta has given a number of examples of Muhammad's great reverence for abstract justice and form of law. These show that he would, at times, appear as a suppliant in a court of justice, would behave like an ordinary citizen and receive punishment from the hands of his judge; on the other hand, he would, normally, inflict barbarous punishments of death and mutilation for the most petty offences. Usually, he was all kindness; but at times, when his wrath was excited, he would behave like a most cruel man and a great tyrant. Hence one cannot escape the conclusion that Muhammad bin Tughluq was a mixture of opposites.

FIROZ TUGHLUQ, 1351—1388

His early life

Firoz was born in 1309. He was the son of Rajjab who was the younger brother of Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq. His mother was a Bhatti Rajput and a daughter of Ran Mal, a petty chieftain of Abohar in the modern district of Hissar in the East Panjab. The marriage was a forced one. It is said that Ghazi Tughluq, when governor of Dipalpur, heard of the beauty and charm of this Rajput girl and pressed Ran Mal to give her away in marriage to his younger brother. But the proud Rajput spurned the proposal. Ghazi Malik, therefore, used coercion and reduced Ran Mal and his people to great hardship. The girl told her father that if by giving her away the family saved itself from inevitable destruction she would have no objection to the proposed marriage. Firoz was the offspring of this union. When he grew up, Firoz was trained in the art of administration and warfare; but he does not seem to have distinguished himself in either. Muhammad Tughluq had affection for his cousin and associated him with the administration of the kingdom. It is said that he intended Firoz to be his successor.

His accession

Firoz was present in the royal camp at Thatta when Muhammad breathed his last on 20th March, 1351. The royal army, being very greatly harassed by the enemy, Taghi, and the Mongol mercenaries who had been employed by Muhammad as auxiliaries, found itself in great confusion and decided to select a leader lest it should be lost in difficulties. As Muhammad had wished Firoz to succeed him, all eyes turned towards the latter. There was, however,

a small section in favour of the minor son of the Sultan's sister, that pressed this boy's claim on the ground of his more being closely related to Muhammad than Firoz. But the nobles replied that they wanted a grown-up man who should be able to lead them out of the difficulties. They urged Firoz to accept the crown. He, being a man of retiring disposition and religious bent of mind, rejected the offer. The nobles, the *shaikhs* and the *ulema*, thereupon, combined to bring pressure upon him. He yielded to their importunities. His coronation took place in the camp near Thatta on 23rd March, 1351.

The new king restored order in the army, saved it from the enemy and set out for Delhi. Hardly had he quitted Sindh when information was received that Khwaja-i-Jahan, deputy of the late Sultan, had proclaimed at Delhi a boy as the son and successor of Muhammad bin Tughluq and carried out his enthronement. When the army reached Multan, Firoz held consultations with his nobles and the Muslim jurists. The nobles refused to admit the existence of any son of the late Sultan. The jurists pronounced their opinion that Khwaja-i-Jahan's candidate, being a minor, was not qualified to be the Sultan of Delhi. As in Muslim law sovereignty is not considered to be a matter of 'inherited right', it was unnecessary to consider whether the boy had any right to the throne from the legal standpoint. Moreover, the time required a powerful man at the helm of affairs. The cause of Khwaja-i-Jahan's nominee was doomed; so the minister submitted and was pardoned in view of his loyal service in the past. He was allowed to go to his fief of Samana; but was put to death by a follower of Sher Khan, governor of Sunam and Samana, probably at the instigation of the nobles and officers of the army. Firoz now became the undisputed sovereign of a large kingdom.

Firoz's accession has been a subject of controversy among the scholars. Sir Woolseley Haig is of opinion that the boy raised to the throne by Khwaja-i-Jahan was not 'a supposititious son' but an issue of his body. According to him, Firoz's succession was, therefore, irregular and he may be called a usurper. Other historians differ from this view and maintain that there is no record or proof to show that the boy was Muhammad's own son. Even if the child were Muhammad's own son, Firoz's succession was not irregular. According to Islamic law sovereignty is not the monopoly of any particular individual or a class of men. It belongs to one who is competent

to occupy the throne. In other words, there is nothing like 'inherited right' of succession to a Muslim throne. Though it must be admitted that in the Sultanate the succession of a son had come to receive some kind of recognition, yet competence and the will of the electors, that is, chief nobles and theologians, and, sometimes, nomination by the dying monarch were the decisive factors in the choice of a successor. Firoz was duly elected, he was pronounced competent and, according to Barani, he was nominated heir by Muhammad. Thus he fulfilled all important conditions. Hence, he cannot be called usurper; nor can it be maintained that his accession was irregular. Dr. Ram Prasad Tripathi says that Firoz's accession revived the principle of election which "had been gradually receding in the background without, however, denying the right of the son to rule. The case also emphasised fitness against merely close relationship to the sovereign." Moreover, it enunciated two new principles, namely, that it did not matter if a ruler was born of a mother who had been a non-Muslim before her marriage, and that it was not necessary that he should be a distinguished soldier. For these reasons Firoz's accession "is as important as it is interesting."

DOMESTIC POLICY

Administration

Towards the end of August, 1351, Firoz entered the capital without opposition. He appointed Malik-i-Maqbul his prime minister and gave him the title of Khan-i-Jahan. The new prime minister was a Brahman from Telingana and had recently become a convert to Islam. He was a very able administrator and his adhesion proved to be a great asset. Firoz's first task was to conciliate his subjects by remitting all debts due to the government and by "abstaining from any endeavour to recover the treasure which had been lavished by Khwaja-i-Jahan in his attempt to establish his nominee." The Sultan was lucky in enjoying the confidence and support of the people of Delhi, particularly of the orthodox Sunni section of its population. He was able, with public support, to effect some improvements in the administration of law and order and to give security to the people which had been sadly lacking owing to disturbances during the last years of Muhammad's reign. Firoz looked upon himself as trustee of the state and responsible for the welfare of the people. He reasserted the principles of the theocratic system of government and

considered himself to be the real sovereign of the Muslim section of his subjects for whose moral and material welfare he did all that was possible in that age. He tried to approximate to the ideal of a true Islamic monarch. Firoz, therefore, lived and worked in a dual capacity, that is, temporal ruler of all the people living in his dominions and temporal and spiritual (religious) ruler of his Muslim subjects. He succeeded in giving a certain measure of material prosperity to the people and in raising the importance of orthodox Islam.

The second task before the new Sultan was that of "raising the Delhi Sultanate from the state of decrepitude and demoralisation into which it had fallen since the closing years of his predecessor's reign." This was not possible without spectacular military achievement and without recovering the lost provinces of the kingdom, namely, the Dakhin, Bangal, Sindh and Rajasthan. Firoz, who lacked military ability of a high order and power of domination, shuddered from the thought of recovering the Dakhin and Rajasthan. He made a half-hearted attempt, and without success, to bring Bangal and Sindh back under the control of Delhi. He made little or no attempt to increase the power and prestige of the crown. He was essentially a man of peace. His main work was directed to improving the economic lot of the people. He introduced no administrative reforms as such (except those in the revenue department); but made the administration work smoothly during his long reign. He appointed capable ministers, entrusted the work of government to them and gave them his confidence and support. This was the secret of his success as a ruler.

The revenue policy

Firoz paid great attention to the revenue affairs of his kingdom. He found the financial and the revenue administration in a chaotic condition. The people had suffered greatly from extortion, maladministration and famine. To heal the wounds and restore confidence he wrote off the *taqavi* loans that had been advanced to the people by the late Sultan. He increased the salaries of the officers and abolished the use of physical coercion to which governors and revenue officers were subjected when they came to the court to render accounts of the income and expenditure of their jurisdictions. The most important task was that of preparing a statement of the probable income of the state. He had a rough estimate made of the

public revenues of the kingdom. This task was entrusted to an experienced revenue officer, named Khwaja Hisam-ud-din. As the result of six years' hard work, during which he made a tour of the provinces and examined revenue records, the Khwaja fixed the revenue of the *khalsa* land in the kingdom at six crore and eighty-five lakh *tankas*. These figures, which remained unchanged, represented Firoz's annual income from the land revenue of the territory directly under the state administration throughout his reign. The estimate was not made on the basis of the measurement of land and the ascertainment on the actual produce of the soil. It was the result of guess or speculation, reinforced by local information and the past experience of the revenue department. He abandoned the more scientific method of fixing the state demand by measurement of land. Inspite of this basic defect, the fixing of the land revenue of the Sultanate on more or less a permanent basis was a great achievement for which Firoz deserves credit.

The Sultan abolished as many as twenty-four vexatious taxes, including the much hated grazing and house taxes. He lowered the State demand as far as land revenue was concerned. He further lightened the cultivator's burden by putting an end to the pernicious custom of imposing benevolences on the governors at the time of their appointment, and also annually, which really used to fall upon the shoulders of the people. In conformity with the Quranic law, Firoz charged only four taxes, namely, *kharaj*, *khams*, *jizya* and *zakat*. *Kharaj* was the land tax; *khams* meant one-fifth of the booty captured during war. Ala-ud-din and Muhammad Tughluq used to appropriate four-fifth of the booty, leaving only one-fifth to the army. But Firoz followed the Islamic custom of taking one-fifth and leaving four-fifth to the soldiery. Firoz was quite strict in realising *jizya* from the non-Muslims. He even extended its scope by charging it from the Brahmans who had either been exempt from this tax or had managed to evade it. *Zakat* was a $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent tax on property realised from the Muslims and was spent on certain specific religious purposes only. In addition to these four taxes, the Sultan later on added, with the approval of the *ulema*, irrigation tax levied on those cultivators who made use of the waters of the State canals for irrigating their fields. Its rate was one-tenth of the produce of the irrigated area. Officers and revenue collectors were warned not to charge more than the prescribed dues. Those who violated these

instructions were punished. Revenue officers and collectors were paid liberally by grants of land, and also allowances, so that they might not harass the cultivators.

The Sultan took steps to make internal trade free by abolishing a number of duties that had greatly hampered the circulation of merchandise and retarded commercial prosperity. This wise measure revived the already dwindling trade.

The great interest that Firoz paid to revenue administration brought him considerable income. His enhanced revenues were due to (1) improved quality of cultivation and superior crops, (2) water tax, and (3) gardens. Firoz was very fond of gardens. He laid out 1,200 fruit gardens in the neighbourhood of Delhi which yielded an annual revenue of one lakh and eighty thousand tankas and enabled him to solve the problem of food shortage in Delhi.

The result of the above measures was extension of cultivation, progress of trade, general prosperity of the people and increase in the revenue of the State. Grain, cloth and other necessities of life became very cheap. We are told by contemporary writers that no village lay waste and no land fit for cultivation remained untilled. This seems to be an exaggeration; but there is no doubt that cultivators toiled hard and their fields produced much more than they had done for many years in the past. Shams-i-Siraj Afif sums up the effect of Firoz's beneficial revenue reforms in these words: "Their (people) homes were replete with grain, property, horses and furniture; everyone had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments and no house without good beds and *divans*. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The State did not suffer from financial bankruptcy during this reign. The revenues of the Doab amounted to eighty lakhs of tankas and those of the territories of Delhi to six crores and eighty-five lakhs of tankas."

Firoz's revenue policy was marred by three main defects. The first was the extension of the farming system which had been in existence throughout the period. Both Ala-ud-din and Muhammad bin Tughluq had discouraged it and preferred direct management. Firoz, on the other hand, gave great impetus to this system. The work of revenue collection was given to the highest bidders who tried to extort as much from the cultivators as they could. The second defect was his *jagir* system. Both Ala-ud-din and Muhammad Tughluq were against the grant of *jagirs* to military and civil officers.

Firoz, however, made it a rule to pay his military commanders, and even soldiers and civil officers, by assigning land to them. The assignment deeds were sold at a discount to professional revenue collectors with the result that the state suffered, the people were harassed and the assignees also got less than their legitimate share of the revenue of the assigned land. The third defect was the extension of the scope and rigours of collection of the *jizya*. Being a religious tax and a charge from the non-Muslims, it was already very unpopular. But, as Firoz was religiously inclined, he rigorously collected this tax. To him it was an anomaly that the Brahmans, who were the 'citadel of infidelity', should be free from it. So he imposed this tax upon the Brahmans for the first time in the history of the Sultanate.

Irrigation

Another measure undertaken by the Sultan for the encouragement of agriculture was the introduction of a series of canals for irrigational purposes. Five such canals were constructed at the Sultan's orders. The most important of them was the canal which carried the waters of the Yamuna to the city of Hissar. It was 150 miles long. The second canal, 96 miles long, ran from the Satlaj to the Ghaghara. The third started from the neighbourhood of Mandavi and Sirmaur hills and connected it with Hansi. The fourth ran from the Ghaghara to the newly established town of Firozabad and the fifth ran from the Yamuna to Firozabad. The remains of some of these canals are seen to this day. Firoz sunk 150 wells, both for irrigation and for the use of travellers.

A large area of land covering over 160 miles was served by two of the biggest canals. In the Doab alone there sprung up 52 colonies. In the area watered by the canals, superior crops, such as, wheat, sugarcane, lentils, etc., were grown. Fruits were also cultivated.

Public works

Firoz was a great builder of works of public utility. He is said to have founded 300 towns which cannot be true unless we include in this the number of villages that had decayed or disappeared but were repopulated as a result of the Sultan's kindly policy of encouraging agriculture. The important towns of Firozabad (the Kotla Firoz Shah in Delhi), Fatehabad, Hissar, Jaunpur and Firozpur

(near Badaun) were founded by him. He built "four mosques, thirty palaces, two hundred caravan-sarais, five reservoirs, five hospitals, a hundred tombs, ten baths, ten monumental tombs, and a hundred bridges." He had two of Asoka's pillars brought to Delhi; one from Khizrabad and the other from near Meerut. Besides, he laid out many gardens. As has already been given, he laid out 1,200 gardens in the vicinity of Delhi which produced so much fruit that it brought to the treasury an annual income of one lakh and eighty thousand tankas.

Justice and other humanitarian measures

Firoz was guided by the Islamic law in the administration of justice. There was a chief qazi at the capital and several subordinate qazis in the provinces and in important towns in his dominions. According to the Islamic practice, the *mufti* expounded the law while the qazi delivered the judgment. The Sultan abolished torture which was commonly practised as a means of ascertaining the truth. But, as Firoz was kind-hearted, sometimes he imposed very mild punishment on criminals. Some culprits got no punishment at all. The result of his elemency was, on the whole, not very wholesome.

Firoz introduced some benevolent measures for the welfare of the people. He established an employment bureau and placed an officer in charge of it. The names of unemployed persons were registered in this office and they were given suitable appointments according to their qualifications and fitness. He established a charity bureau which was called *Diwan-i-Khairat*. The department gave pecuniary help for the marriage of Muslim girls and for the benefit of widows and orphans. The Sultan established a charitable hospital, *Dar-ul-Shafa*, which was placed under the charge of skilful physicians. Patients were supplied free medicines and diet.

Promotion of learning

Firoz was greatly interested in learning. He was a patron of scholars and granted them liberal subsistence allowances. He established many schools, colleges and monasteries, placed these institutions in charge of learned men and endowed them handsomely. There was an educational institution attached to each mosque. The Sultan was specially fond of history. Zia-ud-din Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif wrote their works under his patronage. Two other important works of history, namely, *Fatwah-i-Jahandari* by

Barani and *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi*, were written during his reign. The Sultan wrote his autobiography which is entitled *Faluhat-i-Firozshahi*. He was interested in medicine also. After the conquest of Kangara a great library containing Sanskrit works fell into his hands. Firoz caused some of the Sanskrit works to be translated into Persian. One of these was given by him the name of *Dalayal-i-Firozshahi*. Firoz's personal interest and the state patronage of learning encouraged the study of theology, jurisprudence and other branches of Islamic learning. It must, however, be confessed that the outlook of most of the scholars of the time was rather narrow and vitiated by religious fanaticism.

Religious policy

Firoz Tughluq was elevated to the throne by prominent nobles and the *ulema*. By temperament and training, too, he was attracted towards religion. Moreover, as he was born of a lady who had been Hindu at least in her early life, the Sultan must have thought it necessary to show that he was no less a Musalman than those who were born of parents of pure Turkish lineage. For these reasons, he followed the policy of restoring the prestige and power of the *ulema*. Unlike Ala-ud-din and Muhammad Tughluq, he consulted Muslim divines and accepted their advice even in political and secular matters. Owing to this policy the separation between the church and the state and the conflict between the Sultan and the clerical order of the previous reign came to an end. As the *ulema* were orthodox Muslims with narrow and cramped outlook on life, their interference in state affairs produced injurious results. Under their influence, Firoz behaved as a true Islamic monarch and considered it to be his duty to stand forth as a champion of 'the faith' and to repress Hinduism and put down idolatry. The Sultan himself writes in his autobiography that he encouraged his subjects to embrace Islam by various methods. He exempted those Hindus from *jizya* who became converts to this religion. He encouraged conversion by giving jagirs, rewards in cash, titles and honours and state employment. He demolished temples and broke their images to pieces, and ordered a Brahman to be put to death on the charge that he was seducing Muslims to give up their religion.

The Sultan was very intolerant towards the Shias and other non-Sunni Musalmans who were considered to be heretics by orthodox Sunnis. The Shias were punished and their religious books were

publicly burnt, the Mulhids were similarly persecuted, and so also the Mahdwis. Even the Sufis were not spared.

Such a ruler was bound to entertain great regard for the nominal Khalifa of Egypt. From him he twice received the investiture and robes of honour as Sultan. For the first time in the history of the Sultanate of Delhi, Firoz described himself as the deputy of the Khalifa. The Khalifa's name was included in the coins and was read in the *khutba* along with that of the Sultan.

The slave system

The slave system received great impetus during the reign of Firoz who was very fond of them. He issued standing instructions to his governors and other officers to send him slaves from all parts of the kingdom. These slaves numbered about one lakh and eighty thousand out of whom forty thousand were enlisted for service in the Sultan's palace. They were placed under a separate officer with a regular staff of subordinates and clerks. A large sum of money was earmarked for the expenditure of this department. Most of the slaves were posted in various provinces. Firoz made a good arrangement for their education and employment; but the system became very pernicious. Like the *ulema*, the slaves interfered with the administration. The slave system became an important cause of the disintegration of the Sultanate of Delhi.

Army

The army was organised on a feudal basis. The standing army established up Ala-ud-din Khalji seems to have gone into disuse and its place taken up by contingents of troops furnished by nobles and provincial governments, though, of course, the old bodyguards remained as before. The troops were generally paid by grants of land. A small number of irregulars were paid direct from the royal treasury. A majority of the armymen were paid by transferable assignments on the revenue. The assignments were purchased at Delhi by a professional class at one-third of their value. These were sold to the soldiers in the districts at one-half. This practice led to great abuse and the army discipline suffered considerably. The second defect was due to the rule that when a soldier became old, his son or son-in-law or even slave could succeed him. Service in the army, thus, became hereditary and considerations of merit and fitness were thrown to the winds. Thirdly, leaving aside a small

section of eighty or ninety thousand cavalry, which remained at the capital, the rest of the army consisted of quotas supplied by the nobles. This part of the army could not be properly controlled by the central government, as the recruitment, promotion and discipline of the troops was in the hands of the nobles and not in that of the army minister. The military establishment became weak and ceased to be a great instrument of force.

FOREIGN POLICY

Firoz's foreign policy was marked by vacillation and weakness. He made no attempt to recover the Dakhin that had torn itself off from the Sultanate and had become absolutely independent during the later years of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign. When pressed by his advisers to reduce the Bahamani kingdom, he evaded it on the plea that he was altogether against shedding the blood of the Muslims. Though he had no such scruples in regard to Rajasthan, he showed no desire to bring Mewar, Marwar and other states back under the suzerainty of Delhi. His feeble attempts to reduce Bengal failed ignominiously. In fact, his expeditions revealed the lack of military talent on his part and brought little or no gain to the Sultanate.

Bangal

Bangal had asserted its independence as early as 1338. By 1352 Haji Iliyas, who styled himself as Shams-ud-din Iliyas Shah, had brought the whole of that province under his rule. Next, he invaded Tirhut with the object of conquering the south-eastern part of the Delhi Sultanate. Such an aggression could not be tolerated even by Firoz who invaded Bangal in 1353 with 70,000 horse and a large number of foot soldiers. Iliyas, abandoning his capital, Pandua, fled to Ikadala which Firoz failed to subdue. Fearing the approach of the rainy season, the Sultan gave up the campaign and began his return march to Delhi. Iliyas attacked him on the way but was defeated, and the Delhi army returned safely to the capital.

In 1359 Firoz again invaded Bangal on the pretext of helping Zafar Khan, a son-in-law of a previous Sultan of East Bangal, to vindicate his claim to that province. Iliyas's successor, Sikandar, like his father, fled to Ikadala and Firoz had to recognise his independence and return to Delhi without achieving his object.

Expedition to Puri

On his way back from Bangal Firoz halted for sometime at Jaunpur from where he marched against Jajnagar (modern Orissa). His objective was the famous Jagannath temple of Puri. The Raja of Jajnagar fled. The fanatical Sultan desecrated the temple and threw the idol into the sea. The Raja offered his submission and agreed to send twenty elephants as tribute, whereupon Firoz returned to Delhi.

Conquest of Nagarkot

In 1360 the Sultan led an expedition to Nagarkot in Kangara which had passed out of the control of Delhi during the closing years of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign. The Raja submitted after six months' siege and was honourably received. Among the booty acquired were 1,300 Sanskrit manuscripts some of which were translated into Persian on the Sultan's orders.

Conquest of Sindh

In 1361-62 Firoz invaded Sindh at the head of 90,000 horse, numerous infantry and 480 elephants, besides many boats. The ruler, Jam Babaniya, opposed him with an equally powerful force. The Delhi army suffered greatly in the contest and Firoz was obliged to retreat to Gujarat for reinforcement. But he was misled by the guides into the Ran of Kutch from where he emerged after six months, during which period great anxiety was felt at Delhi on account of the absence of news about the Sultan and his army. In 1363 Firoz reattacked Thatta with the help of an additional army sent from Delhi by his prime minister, Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul. The Jam agreed to pay a tribute, whereupon the Sultan returned to his capital.

The country was remarkably free from Mongol invasions during Firoz's reign. Only two Mongol raids are said to have taken place. They were, however, repelled without difficulty.

Suppression of rebellions

During the early years of his reign an unsuccessful plot was formed against the Sultan's life by his cousin, Khudavandzada, the sister of Muhammad bin Tughluq. His later years, also, were disturbed by a few rebellions. The first rebellion occurred in Gujarat. There the new governor, Damaghani, raised the standard of rebellion as he could not collect the huge sum for which the

revenues of the province had been farmed out to him. He was, however, defeated and killed and his head was sent to the court. The second rebellion occurred in Etawah in 1377 where revenue could hardly be collected except at the point of the bayonet. This, too, was suppressed. The third took place in Katehar where the Raja, Kharku, put two Sayyids to death. Firoz, anxious to punish the crime, marched to Katehar in 1380. He ordered a general massacre of the people. Kharku fled into the hills of Kamaun and the Sultan's wrath fell upon the people of the province. Under the Sultan's orders the Delhi army perpetrated great cruelty. Thousands of innocent people were slain and 23,000 were taken prisoners and converted into slaves. He appointed an Afghan governor of the province and, during the next five years, visited it annually to supplement the Afghan's bloody work. The result was that, in the words of the historian, "the spirits of the murdered Sayyids themselves arose to intercede."

Last days and death

The later years of Firoz's life were clouded by sorrow and misery. The death in July 1374, of his eldest son, Fateh Khan, whom he had nominated his heir-apparent, administered a severe blow to him. He was already very old and, owing to the grief, his power and judgment began to fail him. He now nominated his second son, Zafar Khan, his successor; but he, too, died. The Sultan's choice now fell on his third son, Muhammad Khan; but he was not formally appointed heir. Power now passed into the hands of the prime minister, Khan-i-Jahan, the son of the great Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul who had died sometime before. The prime minister fomented trouble and persuaded Firoz to believe that the prince was conspiring with Zafar Khan and other nobles to seize the throne for himself. The deluded Sultan authorised Khan-i-Jahan to punish the prince's partisans. Zafar was consequently arrested and imprisoned in the prime minister's house. But prince Muhammad managed to enter the royal apartments in the disguise of a woman, threw himself at his father's feet and explained to him that Khan-i-Jahan was a traitor and intended to pave his own way to the throne by bringing about the destruction of the royal family. Firoz permitted the prince to punish Khan-i-Jahan, whose house was now besieged. But Khan-i-Jahan managed to flee by a back door to Mewat where he took shelter. Prince Muhammad was now associated with the adminis-

tration and was allowed to share the royal title. He was formally declared heir-apparent in August 1387. The prince had Khan-i-Jahan killed. He then appropriated all power in the State; but, instead of looking after public business, he devoted himself to pleasure. The administrative machinery became lax and there was confusion. Some of the royal nobles tried to rouse Muhammad to sense of responsibility, but without success. Being disappointed, they organised a rebellion against his authority. Muhammad was obliged to fight. He was on the verge of victory when the nobles brought the Sultan into the field. The appearance of Firoz at the head of the army brought about a debacle. Muhammad was defeated and fled for his life. Firoz now appointed his grandson, Ghiyasuddin Tughluq Shah, son of the deceased Fateh Khan, as his heir and conferred upon him the royal title. The old Sultan died on September 20, 1388, aged about eighty.

Personality and character

Historians hold different views about the personality and character of Firoz Tughluq. Contemporary writers, such as, Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif, praise him as the most just, merciful and benevolent ruler since the time of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud. Henry Elliot, the editor of *History of India as told by its own Historians*, and Elphinstone, author of *History of India*, have described Firoz as Akbar of the Sultanate period. Dr. V.A. Smith differs emphatically and says that it is absurd to compare Firoz with Akbar. Dr. Ishwari Prasad maintains that "Firoz had not even a hundredth part of the genius of that great-hearted and broad-minded monarch who preached from the high platform of public interest the gospel of peace, goodwill and toleration towards all sects and creeds." Sir Woolseley Haig's considered opinion is that "the reign of Firoz closes the most brilliant epoch of Muslim rule in India before the reign of Akbar." The truth lies between these extremes.

There are no two opinions about the fact that Firoz possessed qualities of the heart, though not of the head. He was honest and sincere in his convictions and professions, and he really wished the welfare of his people. No Sultan of Delhi before or after him did so much for the material prosperity of his subjects. His revenue policy fostered agricultural prosperity and gave comfort and happiness to the vast majority of the people. He did whatever was possible in that age to free the trade and commerce which resulted in cheapening

the prices of things. Dr. R. P. Tripathi rightly observes: "The masses judge a ruler by the material prosperity that they can see and feel....." It is no wonder, therefore, that Firoz has won golden opinion from historians, both contemporary and modern.

The Sultan's numerous acts of charity added to his popularity. The employment bureau, the charity department, the state endowed schools and colleges, subsistence allowances and stipends to scholars and holy men, the comfort and convenience given to travellers and his mild and generous treatment towards State employees—all combined to contribute to a feeling that the Sultan was the real trustee of the people's welfare. Measures like the above had not been undertaken by any previous Turkish ruler. That they were sorely needed after the great sufferings and harassment of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign hardly needs emphasising. Hitherto the activity of the ruler was confined to making fresh conquests, to the maintenance of law and order and collection of revenue. Firoz widened the sphere of State activity in the interests of his subjects. He must get credit for it.

But there is the other side of his character which is disappointing to those who believe in military exploits and in the prestige of the monarch. Far from being a military genius, Firoz was not even a seasoned soldier or a successful commander. He was timorous and his expeditions brought him little prestige and no gain. Secondly, sometimes his generosity and benevolence were indiscriminate and, as such, injurious to the interests of order and discipline without which no administration can ever be successful. In fact, Firoz was sometimes over-lenient which marred the efficiency of administration and stood in the way of proper enforcement of the reforms which he himself had devised. Many instances of Firoz's misplaced generosity are on record in the pages of his court historians. It is said that once he gave a gold *tanka* to a trooper to bribe the clerks of the military department who would not pass an unfit horse at a military review without illegal gratification. At another time, he connived at the fraud committed by his mint master who deliberately allowed an undue proportion of alloy in the coins in order to misappropriate a large sum of money. He was aware that the transferable assignment deeds given to the soldiers in lieu of their salaries were sold at one half of their face value and yet he did not take any steps against the malpractices. Similar other instances of the Sultan's injurious

leniency can be multiplied; but the above are enough to show that interested persons took undue advantage of his mildness. Thirdly, he organised his army on a feudal basis which impaired its discipline and solidarity as a fighting force. Fourthly, his fondness for slaves, whose number rose to one lakh and eighty thousand, led to undue interference in the work of administration and caused great embarrassment to honest officers. Fifthly, Firoz's religious policy, which was based on the principle of active interference with the religious beliefs and practices of the overwhelmingly vast majority of his subjects, was ill-advised, unjust and injurious. Under him, for the first time in the history of the Sultanate, the State became a proselytising agency. He did everything to convert Hindus to Islam. "I encouraged," says Firoz in his autobiography, "my infidel subjects to embrace the religion of the Prohphet, and I proclaimed that every one who repeated the creed and became a Musalman should be exempt from *jizya* or poll tax. Information of this came to the ears of the people at large, and great numbers of Hindus presented themselves and were admitted to the honour of Islam." Such a policy was bound to alienate the people's sympathy. He restored the *ulema* to their former place of ascendancy. Although it made him popular with them, the policy eventually proved injurious to the best interests of the Sultanate. Firoz won the good opinion of orthodox Sunni public by subscribing to their narrow fanatical views. This, too, in the long run, sapped the foundation of his kingdom. Dr. Tripathi is right when he says : "The irony of history reflects itself in the unfortunate fact that the very qualities that had contributed to the popularity of Firoz were also largely responsible for the weakness of the Sultanate of Delhi."

Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul

The credit for whatever success was achieved by Firoz Tughluq goes mostly to his prime minister, Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul. He was originally a Brahman of Telingana and was in the service of the raja of the place. After the conquest and annexation of the kingdom, Maqbul turned a Muslim. He was employed by Muhammad bin Tughluq and was given the fief of Multan. When Firoz became king, Maqbul was raised to the exalted post of the prime minister. He was illiterate, yet a very talented politician. Firoz reposed confidence in Khan-i-Jahan and left him in charge of the capital whenever he had to go on a distant expedition. The prime minister

managed the affairs of the government so efficiently that nothing went wrong during the absence of the king. Like most well placed men in that age, Khan-i-Jahan was addicted to sensual pleasures. His *harem* is said to have comprised two thousand women of different nationalities and he had many children from them. He died in 1370 at a ripe old age. He was succeeded in the office of prime minister by his son, Jauna Shah, who was given his father's title of Khan-i-Jahan.

LATER TUGHLUQS, 1388—1414

On Firoz's death in September 1388, the throne of Delhi passed to his grandson, Tughluq Shah, son of Fateh Khan, who assumed the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq II. He was an inexperienced and pleasure-loving youth. His conduct gave offence to his *maliks* and *amirs* who deposed him and placed Abu Bakr, son of Zafar Khan, on the throne on February 19, 1389. But prince Muhammad, who had acted as Firoz's deputy and had been driven out of the capital by a party of nobles, asserted his claim to the throne. With the help of certain powerful officials he proclaimed himself king at Samana on 24th April, 1389. Then followed a contest between the two rival monarchs as the result of which Abu Bakr was forced to quit the throne in 1390. But Muhammad, too, could not rule for long. Owing to intemperance and excessive indulgence, his health was greatly impaired and he died in January 1394. He was succeeded by Humayun, entitled Ala-ud-din Sikander Shah who died on March 8, 1395. Then came to the throne Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the youngest son of Muhammad. This prince was destined to be the last ruler of the Tughluq dynasty. His claim to sovereignty was disputed by Nasrat Shah, a son of Fateh Khan, the eldest son of Firoz. For some time there were, thus, two kings ruling at one and the same time—one at Delhi and the other at Firozabad. They lived and quarrelled, as the historian Badauni says, like the kings of the game of chess.

All the later rulers of the Tughluq dynasty who followed Firoz were utterly incompetent men without any ability or strength of character. All of them were puppets in the hands of their ambitious and unscrupulous nobles who intrigued hard to further their own personal interests to the neglect of those of the state. This led to civil wars among the rival claimants to the throne of the kingdom.

The Sultanate of Delhi began to disintegrate. Muslim governors and Hindu chiefs everywhere threw off their allegiance and became *de facto* sovereigns in their own principalities. The vast kingdom built up by the valour, ability and labours of the successive monarchs from Qutub-ud-din to Muhammad bin Tughluq fell to pieces. Malik Sarvar, a eunuch who enjoyed the title of Sultan-ush-Sharq (Ruler of the East), became independent at Jaunpur and laid the foundation of the Sharqi dynasty. Gujarat under Zafar Khan, who had once been its governor, cut off its connection with Delhi. Malwa and Khandesh became independent states. The Khokhars in the north-eastern Panjab, who had never been effectively subjugated, rose in rebellion. The chiefs of Rajasthan made no pretence of showing deference to the Sultan of Delhi, and Gwalior became an independent state. The Hindus of the Doab who hardly paid revenues, except at the point of the bayonet even in the good old days of Muhammad and Firoz, tried to shake off their slavery. Bayana became a new Muslim state. Kalpi also followed suit. The extinction of the kingdom became only a question of time. The death blow was dealt by the terrible invasion of Timur in 1398.

Invasion of Timur, 1398-99

Amir Timur was born in 1336 at Kech in Trans-Oxiana. His father, Amir Turghay, was the chief of the Gurgan or Chagtai branch of the Barlas Turks. Timur ascended the throne of Samarqand in 1369 when he was thirty-three years old. Being an extremely ambitious and enterprising prince, he undertook aggressive conquests of Persia, Afghanistan and Mesopotamia. These successes whetted his appetite for further conquests. The fabulous wealth of Hindustan attracted his attention. The Delhi Sultanate was fast tottering and afforded an opportunity to the Turkish conqueror to help himself at its expense. But, being a clever diplomat, he pretended that his main object in undertaking an expedition to India was to put down idolatry which was tolerated by the Sultans of Delhi. He had no desire whatever of conquering Hindustan and ruling over it either directly or indirectly.

Timur sent the advance guard of his army under his grandson, Pir Muhammad, who besieged and captured Multan early in 1398. He himself started from Samarqand in April 1398, with a very powerful force and, crossing the Indus, the Jhelam and the Ravi, besieged Talamba, seventy-five miles to the north-east of Multan, in October.

After plundering the town and massacring its inhabitants, he reached the vicinity of Delhi in the first week of December 1398, travelling *via* Pak Patan, Dipalpur, Bhatner, Sirsa and Kaithal, plundering and burning the country and massacring the people on the way. On his approach Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Tughluq and his prime minister, Mallu Iqbal, made an attempt to oppose him. Before fighting the Tughluq army, Timur, who wanted to get rid of the embarrassing presence of the prisoners he had made on his way to Delhi, butchered one lakh of Hindu captives in cold blood. Then he fought and defeated Mahmud on 17th December, 1398. The Indian army consisted of ten thousand cavalry, forty thousand infantry and one hundred and twenty elephants, and yet it easily fell before the onslaught of the invading force. Sultan Mahmud fled to Gujarat and Mallu Iqbal to Bulandshahr.

Timur occupied Delhi on 18th December, 1398. The citizens of the capital, headed by the *ulema*, waited on the conqueror and begged quarter. Timur agreed to spare the citizens; but, owing to the oppressive conduct of the soldiers of the invading force, the people of the city were obliged to offer resistance. Timur now ordered a general plunder and massacre which lasted for several days. Thousands of the citizens of Delhi were murdered and thousands were made prisoners. A historian writes : "High towers were built with the heads of the Hindus, and their bodies became the food of ravenous beasts and birds.....such of the inhabitants who escaped alive were made prisoners." The conqueror acquired immense riches. Every soldier in his army became rich overnight and "there was none so humble but he had at least twenty slaves." Timur picked up the best artisans of Delhi and sent them to Samarqand to build for him the famous Friday Mosque.

The conqueror remained at Delhi for fifteen days. He had no desire to stay in India and to rule over it. He quitted Delhi on January 1, 1399, on a return march to Samarqand. Passing through Firozabad (Delhi), he reached Meerut which he stormed on 19th January, 1399. He had to engage and defeat two Hindu armies near Hardwar. He then proceeded along the Sivalik Hills to Kangara, plundering and sacking that town and Jammu—everywhere the inhabitants being slaughtered like cattle. Before quitting the borders of our country, the conqueror appointed Khizr Khan, who had been expelled by a rival (Sarang Khan) from the governorship of Multan,

to the government of Multan, Lahore and Dipalpur. He crossed back the Indus on 19th March, 1399 "after inflicting on India more misery than had ever before been inflicted by any conqueror in a single campaign."

Condition of Hindustan after Timur's departure

Timur left our country prostrate and bleeding. There was utter confusion and misery throughout northern India. Our north-western provinces, including northern tracts of Rajasthan and Delhi, were so thoroughly ravaged, plundered and even burnt that it took these parts many years, indeed, to recover their prosperity. Lakhs of men, and in some cases, many women and children, too, were butchered in cold blood. The *rabi* crops standing in the fields were completely destroyed for many miles on both the sides of the invader's long and double route from the Indus to Delhi and back. Stores of grain were looted or destroyed. Trade, commerce and other signs of material prosperity disappeared. The city of Delhi was depopulated and ruined. It was without a master or a caretaker. There was scarcity and virulent famine in the capital and its suburbs. This was followed by a pestilence caused by the pollution of the air and water by thousands of uncared-for dead bodies. In the words of the historian Badauni, "those of the inhabitants who were left died (of famines and pestilence), while for two months not a bird moved wing in Delhi."

The Sultanate of Delhi, which had already been broken up into fragments before Timur' invasion, was now shrunk to the dimensions of a petty principality comprising the capital city and a few districts around it. For about three months the kingdom had no king, as the rival monarchs, Mahmud Shah and Nasrat Shah, had fled to save their skin from the invader's fury. In March 1399, Nasrat Shah, who had been driven out of the capital by his rival, Muhmud, returned to Delhi; but Mallu Iqbal, Mahmud's prime minister, who soon followed him, again expelled him. In 1401 he invited Mahmud back to Delhi and kept him a puppet in his hands. Mallu struggled hard, but unsuccessfully, to re-establish control over some of the neighbouring provinces and was slain in a battle with Khizr Khan of Multan in 1405. Mahmud who was thus freed from the galling tutelage of this dictator, failed to consolidate his authority and died in February 1413. With his death came to an end the Tughluq dynasty founded by Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq in 1320.

The nobles now chose of their number, named Daulat Khan, who refrained from assuming royal dignity. He was not likely to succeed in restoring order and reducing the rebellious provinces to submission where Firoz Tughluq's immediate successors, who had the prestige of crowned monarchs, had failed. In March 1414, Daulat Khan was besieged in Delhi by Khizr Khan of Multan and after a few months' opposition was compelled to surrender. He was sent a prisoner to Hissar. Khizr Khan became ruler of Delhi on May 28, 1414, and laid the foundation of the so-called Sayyid dynasty.

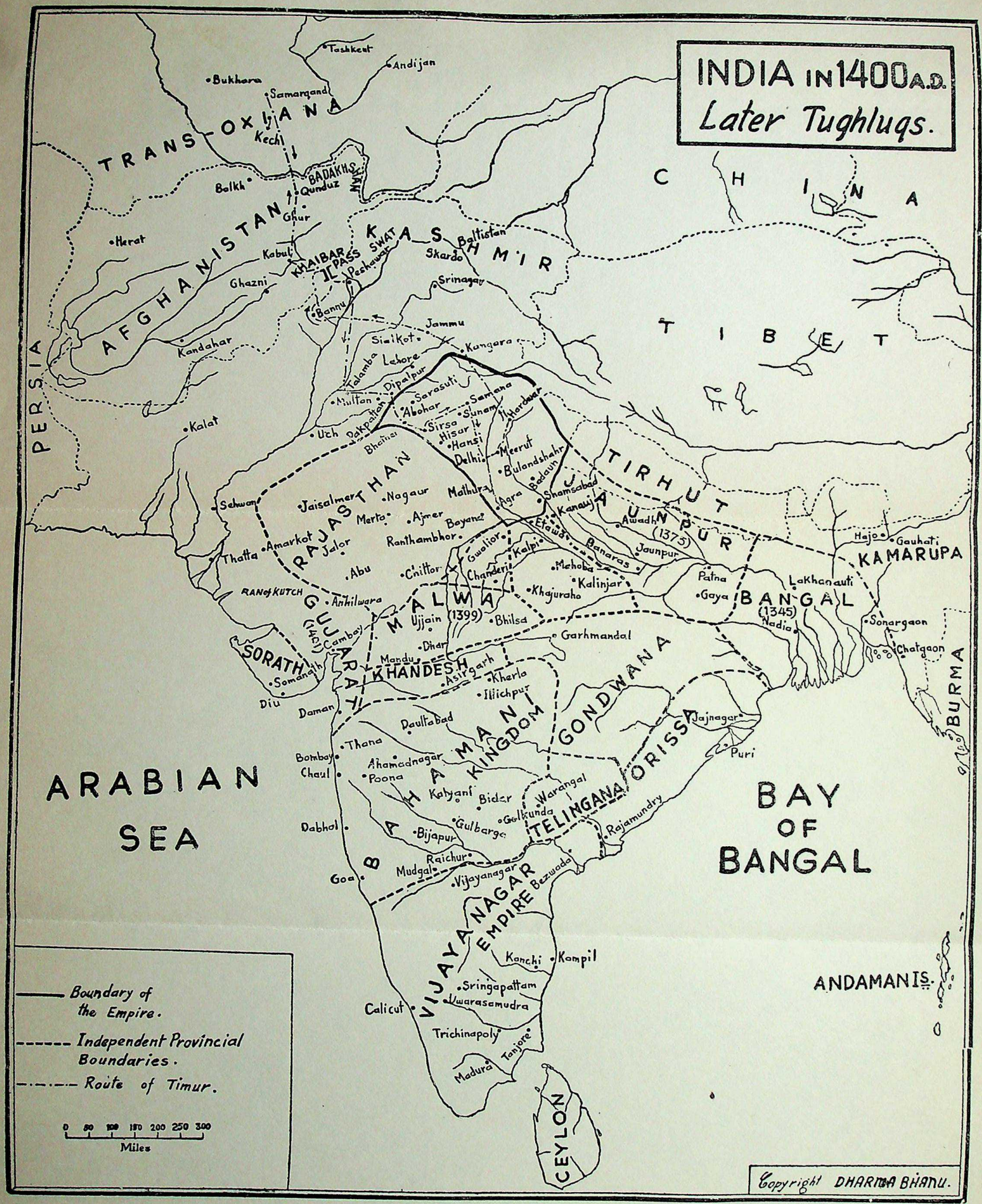
The history of the other independent kingdoms after Timur's departure need not be given in detail. It has already been mentioned that Khwaja Jahan, entitled Malik-ush-Sharq, ruled as an independent monarch at Jaunpur. That newly established kingdom included Jaunpur, a part of Bihar, the whole of Awadh and the territory as far as Kanauj. After the invader had left, the ruler of Jaunpur indulged in aggressive warfare with Delhi in order to bring it under his control. Bangal had become independent since the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Firoz's two expeditions had failed to bring that province back to allegiance. Gujarat, which was a few years before a province of the Sultanate, was now a full-fledged kingdom under Muzaffar Shah. Malwa, too, owned no master. Its ruler, Dilawar Khan, did not assume royal title; but in actual practice he wielded royal authority. The Panjab, Multan and Sindh were in the hands of Khizr Khan, who was appointed governor of these provinces by Timur on his behalf. The province of Samana had turned into a small kingdom under Ghalib Khan. Bayana, near Bharatpur, was ruled by Shams Khan Auhadi. Kalpi and Mahoba were under the sway of Muhammad Khan. The fertile region of the Doab between the Ganga and the Yamuna was in revolt. Gwalior had become a kingdom under a Hindu raja. The territory of Mewat, comprising the districts of Gurgaon, Alwar and Bharatpur, owned no master; sometimes it was in possession of one prince and sometimes in that of another. In southern India, the great kingdom of Vijayanagar, which had been established during the later years of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign, enjoyed an absolute independent status. Another Hindu state was founded in Telingana. Then there was the famous Bahamani kingdom. Khandesh, too, severed its connection with Delhi and became a

separate state. Thus, Timur completed the dissolution of the Sultanate of Delhi which had begun to disintegrate from the later years of Muhammad Tughluq's reign.

Causes of the fall of the Tughluq dynasty

When Muhammad bin Tughluq became king the Sultanate of Delhi embraced almost the whole of the sub-continent of India, except Orissa, Assam, Nepal and Kashmir; but during the reign of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the last ruler of the dynasty, it dwindled to a small principality, the extent and prestige of which could be judged from a contemporary saying which runs thus : "The rule of the Lord of the World extends from Delhi to Palam." (Palam is the present aerodrome town, about seven miles from Delhi.) And, as we have seen, even this diminutive kingdom passed out of the hands of the Tughluq ruling family in 1413.

There were several causes of the decline and fall of the Tughluq kingdom. In the first place, Muhammad Tughluq's character and policy were greatly responsible for the shrinkage of his dominions. Owing to his visionary projects, excessively harsh punishments and wild schemes of conquests, many a provincial governor felt that his safety lay in rebellion and independence. In consequence of this feeling, the Bahamani and the Vijayanagar kingdoms came into existence in the Dakhin. Bangal cut itself off. Sindh was almost lost. In those provinces that yet remained parts of the Sultanate there was great dissatisfaction and discontentment. Secondly, although Firoz Tughluq tried to heal the wounds inflicted by his predecessor, his policy of leniency, religious intolerance, revival of feudalism, and imparing the discipline and efficiency of the army, undermined the royal authority and weakened the administration beyond repair. Thirdly, Firoz Tughluq had lived too long. Two of his elder sons, who could have managed the affairs of the state successfully, pre-deceased him. Moreover, the old Sultan did not make proper arrangement for the education of his successors, with the result that there was no member of the Tughluq family left who could have given promise of a successful reign. Fourthly, the government of the Tughluqs, like that of the previous Sultans of Delhi, was a centralised despotism which could function well only if the ruler at the helm of affairs happened to be a man of ability and strength of character. If, on the other hand, the ruler was weak, his weakness was bound to be reflected in all branches of administration. The later rulers of the


INDIA IN 1400 A.D.
Later Tughluqs.
TRANS-OXIANA
AFGHANISTAN
PERSIA
KASHMIR
CHINA
TIBET
TIRHUT
JAUNPUR (1375)
KAMARUPA
BANGAL (1345)
BURMA
RAJASTHAN
GUJARAT (1401)
MALWA (1399)
SORATH
KHANDESH
BAHAMANI KINGDOM
GONDWANA
ORISSA
TELINGANA
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE
CEYLON
ANDAMAN IS.
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
Tashkent
Andijan
Bukhara
Samarqand
Kech
BADAKHSHAN
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
Herat
Kabul
KHAIBAR PASS
SWAT
Peshawar
Ghazni
Bannu
Kandahar
Kalat
Baltistan
Skardo
Srinagar
Jammu
Sialkot
Kangara
Lahore
Talamba
Dipalpur
Multan
Sarasuti
Samana
Abohar
Sunam
Hardwar
Sirsa
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
Meerut
Bulandshahr
Badaun
Shamsabad
Kanauj
Agra
Mathura
Uch
Pakpattan
Bhatner
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Merta
Ajmer
Bayana
Ranthambhor
Thatta
Amarkot
Jalor
Abu
Chittor
Gwalior
Kalpi
Etawa
Banaras
Jaunpur
Awadh
Mehoba
Kalinjar
Khajuraho
Patna
Gaya
Lakhanauti
Nadia
Hajo
Gauhati
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
RAN of KUTCH
Anhilwara
Cambay
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Garhmandal
Dhar
Mandu
Asirgarh
Kherla
Illichpur
Somanath
Diu
Daman
Daultabad
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Ahamadnagar
Poona
Kalyani
Bidar
Warangal
Golkunda
Gulbarga
Bijapur
Dabhol
Raichur
Mudgal
Goa
Vijayanagar
Bezwada
Rajamundry
Jajnagar
Puri
Kanchi
Kampil
Sringapattam
Uwarasamudra
Calicut
Trichinapoly
Tanjore
Madura
Boundary of the Empire.
Independent Provincial Boundaries.
Route of Timur.
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
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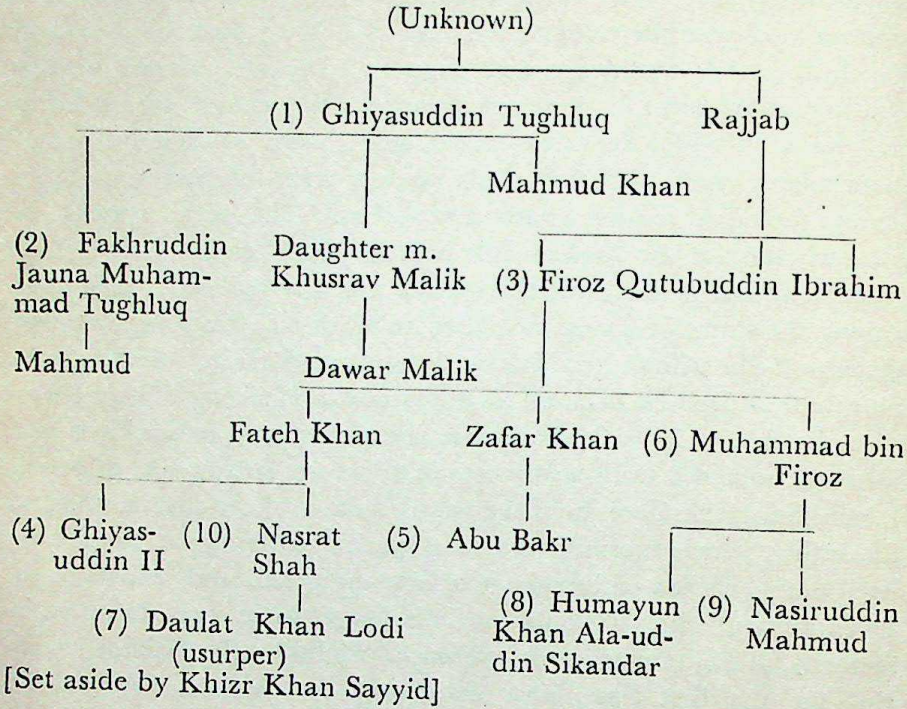
Tughluq dynasty were incompetent, non-entities who were absorbed in pleasure and could not help falling tools into the hands of their powerful nobles. None of them had enough political insight and wisdom to choose the right sort of man for his prime minister and give him his full confidence and support. In the absence of this guiding factor, rival factions sprang up at the court, which led to civil wars. Fifthly, the nobles at the court were as demoralised as their ruler himself, with the result that a man of first-rate ability among the peers became a rare commodity. The slave system, in the early days of the Turkish rule in India, had tended to produce great men; but under Firoz this system deteriorated so rapidly that among the ranks of his slaves and those of his successors there was no Qutub-ud-din Aibak, no Iltutmish and no Balban. Sixthly, the Sultanate of Delhi was based on the force and efficiency of its military organisation. Under Muhammad, and much more under Firoz and his successors, the Delhi army ceased to be an instrument of force. It could not, therefore, hold the people in awe of the royal authority. Seventhly, the government was a police government concerning itself only with the maintenance of law and order and collection of revenues; and when it could not discharge these two duties satisfactorily, it lost reason for its existence. Eighthly, the Dakhin, which had for the first time been conquered in the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji, was yet an uneasy partner in the Sultanate of Delhi. It could be held only by a man of genius like the Khalji conqueror. Under weak rulers there were numerous rebellions in the Dakhin and the severance of its connection with Delhi caused unhealthy repercussions in northern India. And finally, the Hindus, though subjected to the foreign rule for about two hundred years in the north and over a hundred years in the south, had not given up their attempt to make a bid for their freedom. Certain parts even in northern India could never really be effectively subjugated by the Turks. It took more than a hundred and fifty years for Ranthambhor to be finally conquered and annexed. The Doab, though situated very near Delhi, could never really be made submissive. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Tughluqs, Rajasthan became independent. Gwalior and other principalities threw off their yoke. Under the cumulative effect of the above factors, it would have been surprising if the Sultanate of Delhi under the Tughluqs had survived longer than it actually did.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Tughluq Dynasty



11

THE SAYYID DYNASTY

KHIZR KHAN, 1414—1421

Khizr Khan was the first and the ablest ruler of the so-called Sayyid dynasty. His claim to be a descendant of Prophet Muhammad was dubious and rested on the recognition of Shaikh Jalal-ud-din of Bukhara. It seems, however, certain that his ancestors had come from Arabia. Khizr Khan did not assume the title of king, but contented himself with that of *Rayat-i-Ala*. He pretended to act as the viceroy of Shah Rukh, the fourth son and successor of Timur, to whom he is said to have sent the yearly tribute. While he ordered the *khutba* to be read in the name of the Mongol king, his coins continued to bear the name of his Tughluq predecessors. With his accession, the Panjab, Multan and Sindh again became parts of the Sultanate. The extent of the kingdom was now practically doubled.

Khizr Khan's reign was not marked by any striking success. He made an attempt to recover Etawah, Katehar, Kanauj, Patiali and Kampil, but did not achieve much success. Almost every year he would undertake an expedition for plunder and realisation of revenue and would return with certain amount of booty. The revenue of the districts of the kingdom could not be realised without the help of troops. His minister, Taj-ul-mulk, co-operated with him in putting down disorder, but his efforts were not attended with conspicuous success. There grew up a rivalry between Delhi and Gujarat and Delhi and Jaunpur; and the rulers of these two newly established kingdoms tried to conquer and annex Delhi. In the Panjab an impostor, who gave himself out to be Sarang Khan, appeared near Hoshiarpur. The Khokhar chief, Jasrath, gave great trouble in the north-eastern Panjab. Bahadur Nahir of Mewar raised his head. The chiefs in the Doab continued in rebellion and would not pay the revenue except at the point of the bayonet. Khizr Khan struggled hard against these chronic rebellions. He

could not treat his disloyal vassals as rebels and try to crush them completely. His policy was to compel the chiefs and vassals to pay a part of the revenue due from them and to extract a promise to pay the remaining next year. But this promise was almost invariably broken as soon as his back was turned. Having been worn out by these troubles and disorders, Khizr Khan died on May 20, 1421. According to Farishta, he was a just and generous ruler; but he lacked that ability, strength and character which were sorely needed in a king of Delhi at that critical juncture in our history.

MUBARAK SHAH, 1421—1434

While on death bed, Khizr Khan nominated his son, Mubarak Khan, as his heir. The new king sat on the throne of Delhi and assumed the title of Mubarak Shah. The nobles acclaimed him as their ruler, but he could not really get adequate support from them. Like his father, he had to undertake only punitive expeditions to the different parts of his kingdom in order to put down rebels and suppress disorder. Mubarak Shah succeeded in suppressing a rebellion at Bhatinda and also in the Doab; but the Khokhars of the Salt Range could not be punished. Their leader, Jasrath, was an ambitious chief who aspired for the throne of Delhi. Mubarak made little attempt to recover any of the lost provinces of the kingdom. His reign is notable for the fact that for the first time we come across one or two important Hindu nobles at the court of Delhi. Some of the Muslim and Hindu nobles under the leadership of Sarwar-ul-mulk, who was the wazir of the kingdom, hatched a conspiracy against the Sultan. When Mubarak was supervising the construction of a town on the bank of the Yamuna, the plotters fell on him and put him to death on February 19, 1434.

We have a fairly detailed account of the reign of Mubarak Shah and his predecessors in a Persian work entitled *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*. This chronicle was compiled by Yahiya bin Ahmad Sarhindi during the reign of this ruler.

MUHAMMAD SHAH, 1434—1445

On the death of Mubarak Shah the nobles of Delhi elevated Muhammad to the throne. He was a grandson of Khizr Khan and the heir-designate of Mubarak Shah. The wazir, Sarwar-ul-mulk, anxious to keep power in his own hands, appropriated the royal treasures, the stores and the elephants and kept them in his possession.

He persuaded the new king to grant him the title of Khan-i-Jahan. He filled the high offices of the State with his own nominees and supporters. Important fiefs, such as, Bayana, Amroha, Narnaul, Kuhram and some of the parganas in the Doab were assigned to Siddhipala and his friends and followers who had played a prominent part in the assassination of Mubarak Shah. Other followers of the perfidious wazir were similarly rewarded. There was, however, one noble, named Kamal-ul-mulk, who was loyal to Khizr Khan's house and was secretly nursing a grievance against the murderers of Mubarak, whom he wanted to punish. He secretly raised a party of his followers which consisted of old maliks and amirs who were dissatisfied with the wazir for his policy of associating Hindu nobles with the administration of the court. These discontented peers besieged the wazir in the fort of Siri. The new king became a privy to the conspiracy and lent support to Kamal-ul-mulk and his party. On the other hand, Sarwar-ul-mulk wanted to lay hands on the Sultan. The Sultan, however, forestalled their designs and ordered an attack on the wazir and his followers when they came to the court. Kamal-ud-din came up with his followers in time and put Sarwar-ul-mulk and his followers to death. He was now appointed minister and he distributed offices among his friends and supporters. But Kamal-ul-mulk was not likely to succeed, as he had no powerful army at his back. Rebellions continued as before. Ibrahim Sharqi of Jaunpur invaded the eastern parts of the Sultanate and seized a number of its parganas. Mahmud Khalji of Malwa also raided the vicinity of Delhi in order to invade it; but he was obliged to return to his capital, Mandu, on the receipt of the news that his capital was threatened by Ahmad Shah of Gujarat. Moreover, he was nervous to hear that Bahlol Lodi, the governor of Lahore and Sarhind, was coming to reinforce the Delhi army. Bahlol arrived in time and chased the retreating Malwa army and captured its baggage. For this timely service Bahlol was given the title of Khan-i-Khana, and Muhammad called the Lodi chief affectionately his 'son'.

Unfortunately, another important factor emerged in the politics of Delhi at this time. Bahlol Lodi entertained the ambition of seizing the throne of Delhi for himself. He was encouraged in this ambition by Jasrath Khokhar, who had his own axe to grind. To achieve this object, Bahlol began collecting a large army of the Afghans. He invaded Delhi with a large force, but failed to capture the capital

city. The fall of the dynasty, however, was only a question of time. Everywhere there was insubordination. Revenues did not come forth and, at the top of this, the formidable governor in the kingdom, namely, Bahlol Lodi, was hungrily awaiting the opportunity of striking a fatal blow at it. At this critical time Muhammad died in 1445. He had proved weaker than his predecessors.

ALA-UD-DIN ALAM SHAH, 1445—1450

The maliks and amirs now placed Muhammad's son on the throne under the title of Ala-ud-din Alam Shah. The new king was even more incompetent than his father. Bahlol Lodi tried his best to take the fullest advantage of the weakness of the Delhi government. Fortunately for him there was a quarrel between the new king and his wazir, Hamid Khan, whom the Sultan wanted to kill. Hamid Khan, therefore, invited Bahlol to the capital, thinking that the Afghan chief would act as a tool in his hands and allow him to conduct the administration as before. But Bahlol was not the man to share power with anybody. He seized Delhi by a *coup* and put Hamid Khan out of his way. Ala-ud-din Alam Shah, who was a mean spirited ruler, resigned the whole kingdom to Bahlol and betook to Badaun. Bahlol removed Alam Shah's name from the *khutba* and the coins and proclaimed himself king of Delhi on April 19, 1451. Ala-ud-din continued to live as a private nobleman at Badaun where he died a few years later.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Sayyid Dynasty

Malik Sulaiman
|
(1) Khizr Khan Sayyid
|
(2) Muizuddin Mubarak Shah — Farid
|
(3) Muhammad Shah
|
(4) Alauddin Alam Shah
|
Bahlol Lodi (usurper)

12

THE LODI DYNASTY

BAHLOL LODI, 1451—1489

His early life

Bahlol Lodi, the founder of the first Pathan state of Delhi, belonged to the Sahu Khail section of the Lodi clan, an important sub-division of the Ghilzai tribe of Afghanistan. His grandfather, Malik Bahram, had migrated to Multan during the time of Firoz Tughluq and taken service under Malik Mardan Daulat, governor of that province. He had five sons, two of whom, namely, Malik Sultan Shah and Malik Kala, attained some fame. Bahlol was the son of Malik Kala who had vanquished Jasrath Khokhar and set himself up as an independent chief. Bahlol's uncle, Sultan Shah, was appointed governor of Sarhind by Khizr Khan in 1419 and was given the title of Islam Khan. He succeeded in uniting the Afghans of the Panjab under his leadership. Before his death he nominated Bahlol as his successor in preference to his own son, Qutub Khan. On his death Bahlol became the governor of Sarhind. He was allowed to add Lahore to his charge. Being a clever and ambitious officer, he increased the number of his troops and soon became one of the front-rank governors in the Sayyid kingdom. He hastened to the assistance of his master, Muhammad Shah, who was threatened by Mahmud Khalji of Malwa. In reward for this service Bahlol was given the title of Khan-i-Khana. But the Afghan leader was not content with the position of a mere provincial governor. His ambition was to seize the throne of Delhi. His opportunity came when Ala-ud-din Alam Shah quarrelled with his minister, Hamid Khan, and attempted to take his life. The infuriated minister invited Bahlol to Delhi to take charge of the royal army. The king had already betaken himself to Badaun. The power at the court now passed into the hands of the Lodi chief.

His accession

Being an aspirant to full-fledged sovereignty, Bahlol would not

share power with the wazir, Hamid Khan. But the direction of affairs was in the hands of the old minister and it was dangerous to pick an open quarrel with him. The cunning Afghan had, therefore, recourse to stratagem to satisfy his lust for power. He advised his followers, who were cent percent Afghans, to behave like simpletons in the presence of Hamid Khan. Bahlol, too, showed studied courtesy and obsequious servility to the Khan. He made him believe that he had no ambition and was satisfied with the command of the army. These professions and the simpletion-like conduct of the Afghan troops duped Hamid Khan who permitted Bahlol and his followers daily access to the audience hall. One day Bahlol, accompanied by his men, went to pay his respects to the wazir. In the course of the audience, Bahlol's cousin, Qutub Khan, took out chains and putting them round the prime minister's hands said that it was necessary in the interests of the State that he should take rest for some time. Hamid Khan was shocked and asked the reason for such treacherous behaviour. Qutub Khan replied that the Afghans had no faith in him, as he had been disloyal to his former master. After having imprisoned the wazir, Bahlol wrote to Ala-ud-din Alam Shah to return to Delhi. But the timid Sayyid monarch, who was afraid of jeopardising his life at Delhi, declined the offer by replying that his father had called Bahlol 'son' and he was, therefore, like his elder brother. Bahlol liked nothing better. In fact, the offer to Ala-ud-din was not sincere. He now carried out his enthronement on April 19, 1451 and had his name proclaimed in the *khutba*.

Domestic policy

Bahlol was a shrewd politician who clearly realised his limitations. As his power almost exclusively depended upon his Afghan followers, he took steps to keep them satisfied. He behaved as if he were one of the Afghan peers. He did not take his seat on the throne, but sat on the carpet in front of it which he allowed to be shared by his nobles. In order further to strengthen his position, he tried to win the confidence of the army by generous gifts and rewards. He invited the Afghans from his original homeland and allotted large tracts of land in Jagir to them. He held out promise of promotion to the leading members of his tribe.

Anxious to set his house in order and reduce to submission those of the nobles and governors who did not recognise his authority, Bahlol decided to follow a strict policy of militarism. He undertook a

series of expeditions to the neighbouring districts in order to overawe the rebel governors into submission. First, he proceeded against Ahmad Khan Mewati who ruled over the huge territory known as Mewat, consisting of the modern Gurgaon district, the present district of Alwar and part of Bharatpur and Agra districts. Ahmad Khan was frightened and submitted. The Sultan deprived him of seven of his parganas which were annexed to Delhi. The next expedition was directed against Dáriya Khan of Sambhal. To him, too, the Sultan showed indulgence inspite of his past conduct. Dariya Khan submitted and was deprived of seven of his parganas. Next, Bahlol settled his scores with Isa Khan of Koil (modern Aligarh) who was allowed to retain his possessions. Mubarak Khan, the governor of Sakit, and Raja Pratap Singh of Mainpuri and Bhogaon, were similarly confirmed in their possessions. His next expedition was directed against Qutub Khan, son of Husain Khan Afghan, who offered resistance. He was, however, compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of Delhi and pay his obeisance to the Sultan. Accordingly, he was allowed to remain in possession of Rewari. Bahlol had to face some difficulty in the collection of revenue from the Doab, but eventually he succeeded in settling Etawah, Chandawar and other districts of that region. There was some trouble in Multan and Sarhind which, too, was overcome. Thus, by his policy of firmness, the Sultan succeeded in restoring order and discipline in the small kingdom of Delhi.

Foreign policy

Ahmad Yadgar, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana*, maintains that Bahlol undertook the conquest of Chittor and reduced the Rana to submisson. This seems to be improbable, for in between Mewar and Delhi lay the territory of some independent chiefs who were not subdued by the Lodi monarch. Moreover, Ahmad Yadgar is not supported by other reliable authorities. Being a practical politician, Bahlol had realised the impossibility of recovering the lost provinces of the old Sultanate of Delhi. He had, therefore, refrained from undertaking aggressive expeditions against his powerful neighbours who were once vassals of Firoz Tughluq.

He was, however, anxious to reduce the kingdom of Jaunpur to submission and to annex it to Delhi. For this policy of Bahlol the ruler of Jaunpur was primarily to blame. Mahmud Shah of the Sharqi dynasty had married a daughter of Sultan Ala-ud-din, the

last king of the Sayyid dynasty. This proud lady, anxious to avenge her father, urged her husband to attack Delhi and drive Bahlol out of the imperial city. Moreover, Mahmud was invited by some disaffected nobles of Bahlol's court. In view of these reasons Sultan Mahmud Sharqi invaded Delhi at the head of a powerful force consisting of one lakh and seventy thousand horses and one thousand four hundred elephants. Bahlol, who was absent on an expedition to Sarhind, quickly returned to his capital on the news of the invader's approach. On the way, he was opposed by a detachment of the Sharqi army under Fateh Khan. As the armies came face to face, Bahlol's causin, Qutub Khan Lodi, persuaded Dariya Khan Lodi, who was a commander of the Sharqi army, to desert Mahmud and not fight against his own kinsmen. Dariya Khan acted according to this advice which considerably reduced Fateh Khan's strength. Fateh Khan was defeated and killed. Mahmud Sharqi was obliged to abandon his project and to withdraw to Jaunpur. This was only the first of a series of wars between Delhi and Jaunpur. A little later, Mahmud Sharqi was again goaded by his queen to seize Delhi. So he proceeded towards Etawah. Bahlol sent an army to obstruct his progress. Eventually, a peace was made by which the parties agreed that both the rulers should retain possession of the territories that had belonged to their predecessors and that Bahlol should restore the Jaunpur elephants captured during the last war. Mahmud promised to dismiss Jauna Shah from his service. The treaty was not respected by the contracting parties. The ruler of Jaunpur resisted Bahlol's attempt to take possession of Shamsabad which was given to him according to the treaty. Hence a fresh clash became inevitable. In the course of the war Qutub Khan Lodi was taken prisoner. But, as Mahmud Shah died the next day, a peace was again made with Jaunpur. The restoration of Qutub Khan was not included in the articles of the treaty. So it became necessary for Bahlol to undertake a fresh expedition against Jaunpur during the course of which he captured Jalal Khan, a member of the Sharqi ruling family. Meanwhile, there occurred a revolution at Jaunpur which gave the throne of that kingdom to Husain Shah. There was now a four years' peace between the parties, and Qutub Khan and Jalal Khan were released. Soon after, however, the peace was broken, as Husain Shah invaded Delhi and defeated the Afghan army at Chandawar. He annexed Etawah

and was joined by Ahmad Khan Mewati and Isa Khan of Bayana who were vassals of Bahlol. At this time Bahlol was away on an expedition to Multan. The disquieting news from Delhi compelled him to return quickly to his capital and make a peace with Husain Shah. Very soon after this, Husain Shah again invaded Delhi and captured some territory near Badaun. He gained some initial success; but in view of the resistance by the Delhi army, he was obliged to agree to a peace. The river Ganga was fixed as the boundary between the two states. While the Jaunpur army was retreating after the agreement, Bahlol treacherously attacked it and captured its baggage and treasure. Husain's queen, Malka-i-Jahan, fell into his hands. He was chivalrous enough to treat her with respect, and sent her back to Jaunpur. There was, again, an agreement which was this time violated by Husain. But he was defeated and compelled to take shelter with the raja of Gwalior. With reinforcements from Gwalior he again proceeded towards Delhi, but Bahlol inflicted upon him a series of defeats.

These successes emboldened Bahlol to march upon Jaunpur. Husain opposed him and a prolonged conflict, lasting for several years, followed. Eventually, Husain was beaten and Bahlol annexed his kingdom and placed his son, Barbak Shah, on its throne. This was Bahlol's greatest achievement. The success against Husain Shah brought great prestige to him and enabled him to compel the chiefs of Kalpi, Dholpur, Bari and Alipur to acknowledge his suzerainty.

Bahlol's next undertaking was an expedition to Gwalior. Raja Man Singh of Gwalior was obliged to make him a present of eighty lakhs of tankas. While he was returning from Gwalior, he fell ill and died near Jalali in the middle of July 1489.

His estimate

Bahlol Lodi was a brave and intrepid soldier and a successful general. Possessed of sturdy commonsense, realism and sagacity, he realised the possibilities of the time and set before him a task that was commensurate with his ability and resources. He did not entertain the ambition of reconquering provinces of the Sultanate of Delhi, like the Dakhin or Bangal or even Rajasthan and Malwa. His most important objective was to re-establish Delhi's control over the Doab and the surrounding districts, and also over Jaunpur. He had no time to re-organise the civil administration. But, both as a military leader and as an administrator, he was superior to his immediate

predecessors, from the death of Firoz to that of Ala-ud-din Alam Shah. He knew full well that his Afghan nobles and followers, who were accustomed to tribal and individual independence, would not tolerate the revival of the Turkish theory of sovereignty. Bahlol, therefore, never gave himself airs and declared publicly that he considered himself to be the noble of his nobles. He did not take his seat upon the throne and never insisted on his nobles standing in his court. He allowed his chief nobles to share his carpet. If any of his top-ranking nobles was offended, Bahlol would go to his residence and try hard to pacify him. He would, sometimes, remove his sword from his waist and place it before the offended party. He would even go to the extent of taking off his turban and saying that if his nobles thought him unworthy, they might choose anyone else as their king. Such a policy worked very well, throughout his reign, which was fairly long. Bahlol had hardly any trouble from his powerful Afghan followers.

This Lodi Sultan was a kind-hearted man. It is said that he never turned away a beggar or a poor man from his gate. He was also chivalrous to the fair sex. When queen Malika-i-Jahan of Sultan Husain Shah of Jaunpur fell into his hands, he treated her with great courtesy and consideration and sent her back to her husband under a powerful escort. He would administer justice evenly, according to his lights. He was not unnecessarily fond of wealth. Though himself not well-educated, Bahlol is said to have patronised scholars and men of learning. He was devoted to his religion, but was not fanatical like his son and successor, Sikandar.

Bahlol has two main achievements to his credit. The first was the restoration of the credit and prestige of the Delhi kingdom which had fallen considerably low under the later Tughluqs and their successors, the Sayyids. His second achievement was the conquest and annexation of the kingdom of Jaunpur. Inspite of these achievements, Bahlol's place in the history of the Sultanate of Delhi is not very high. He was a moderately successful king.

SIKANDAR LODI, 1489—1517

His accession

On Bahlol's death his chief nobles became divided on the question of succession to the throne. One group favoured the succession of his third son, Nizam Khan, who was popularly known as Sikandar

Shah; but the other and the more powerful party objected to Nizam's succession on the ground that his mother was the daughter of a goldsmith and urged the claim of Barbak Shah, the eldest son of the deceased and at that time the ruler of Jaunpur. This party had persuaded Bahlol, on his death-bed, to send for Nizam from Delhi lest he should seize the throne in the event of his father's death. But on one pretext or another Nizam had refused to proceed. Meanwhile, Bahlol died. Nizam's mother, who was in the camp with her husband, asserted her son's claim. But she was abused by Isa Khan, Bahlol's cousin, who bluntly told her that a goldsmith mother's son was not eligible for the throne of Delhi. Some of the nobles of the majority party now sympathised with the widow for the discourtesy shown to her. The result was that the Khan-i-Khana manoeuvred things in such a manner as to get the support of the majority of the Pathan nobles for Nizam Khan who was proclaimed king under the title of Sikandar Shah on July 17, 1489.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Suppression of rebellions

Sikandar had to justify his selection. By his policy, character and firm adminstration he showed within a short time that he was the right choice and fittest of all the sons of Bahlol to fill the throne of Delhi. His first task was to set his own house in order by reducing his rivals to submission and increasing the strength of his followers. His uncle, Alam Khan, was one of the candidates for the throne and was preparing to assert his independence in Rapari and Chandawar. Sikandar besieged him at Rapari, defeated him and drove him away from there. Alam Khan took shelter with Isa Khan who was one of the front-rank men who had opposed Sikandar's accession. By a conciliatory policy, Sikandar won over Alam Khan, separated him from Isa Khan and appointed him to the fief of Etawah. He then defeated Isa at Patiali, the latter dying after a few days of the battle. Next, Sikandar defeated his cousin, Azam Humayun, who, too, was a candidate for the throne, took away Kalpi from him and bestowed it upon Muhammad Khan Lodi. Then he defeated Tatar Khan Lodi, another opponent, but generously allowed him to remain in possession of Jhatra. Thus, within a year of his accession, Sikandar succeeded in either subduing or pacifying his opponents and consolidating his power.

Subduing of Barbak Shah

Sikandar was alive to the danger of a divided monarchy. Accordingly, he was anxious to persuade his elder brother, Barbak Shah of Jaunpur, to live in subordinate alliance with him. He sent a mission of peace to Jaunpur which, however, did not meet with success. Sikandar probably felt that, having deprived him of his birth-right, he should make amends to Barbak Shah. But being instigated by Husain Shah, the ex-king of Jaunpur, who had taken shelter in Bihar and felt that a quarrel between the two brothers might open a way for him to recover his lost kingdom, Barbak refused to come to terms with his brother. Sikandar, therefore, prepared to fight. He defeated Barbak who had advanced at the head of an army as far as Kanauj. After this discomfiture, Barbak fled to Badaun, but he was besieged there and compelled to surrender. Sikandar was generous enough to restore him to Jaunpur as a titular king; but he divided that kingdom into fiefs which he distributed among his own followers and placed spies even at Barbak's court and household. A little after, a great rebellion of zamindars residing in the kingdom of Jaunpur occurred. It was instigated by Husain Shah. Barbak could not cope with the situation and had to abandon Jaunpur and flee to Driyabad near Lucknow. Sikandar took prompt action, crushed the rebellion and reinstated Barbak Shah a second time in his kingdom as his vassal. But Barbak proved an utterly incompetent administrator and was, therefore, removed and placed in confinement. Sikandar then appointed his own governor at Jaunpur.

Abasement of the nobility

Having established his absolute authority over his paternal kingdom by reducing Jaunpur to submission, Sikandar turned to the task of bringing his Afghan nobles under proper discipline and control. Without making a fundamental change in the system of government, the Sultan, who was aware of the fissiparous tendencies of his chiefs, wanted to put a curb on their individualistic tendency and tribal independence and to make them contribute to the common good of the entire Pathan community in India. He insisted on proper audit of the accounts of income and expenditure of his governors and other officers. He severely punished defalcation and embezzlement. Mubarak Khan Lodi, one of the chief nobles who had been

entrusted with the collection of revenues of Jaunpur, was punished and compelled to pay into the treasury the state revenues which he had embezzled. Moreover, Sikandar compelled his nobles to show formal respect to the king in the *darbar* and outside. He would not tolerate any discourtesy or disrespect on their part. While playing polo at Jaunpur some of the nobles indulged in a free fight in the presence of the king. Sikandar was highly enraged and ordered one of the offending nobles to be flogged in his presence and he dealt harshly with others. The nobles, in their turn, conspired to depose Sikandar and place his younger brother, Fateh Khan, on the throne. But the conspiracy was divulged and the Sultan banished twenty-two of his nobles from the court. By his strict policy Sikandar, thus, succeeded in bringing the Afghan peers under proper discipline. Not only was he respected as an embodiment of authority, but even his orders were received with a formal ceremony by governors and fief-holders. When Sikandar issued a *farman* to a noble, the latter had to receive it six miles in advance and with due ceremony. When the *farman* was read aloud, all had to listen to it standing.

Much of Sikandar's success as an administrator was due to the excellent espionage system which he borrowed from Ala-ud-din Khalji. The Sultan appointed trustworthy spies and news-writers and posted them everywhere, including even in the houses of his nobles. He was so well posted with up-to-date information that people credited him with supernatural powers. It was widely believed that the Sultan was supplied with news by *genii*. Sikandar was not only a strict disciplinarian but he even tried to administer justice evenly according to the Islamic standard. That was another reason why he succeeded in restoring respect for law and order. Sikandar's reign was marked by material prosperity for which the Sultan was to some extent responsible. He abolished duties on corn and removed the galling restrictions on trade. Grain and cloth and other necessities of life became cheap.

Religious policy

Sikandar's religious policy was that of a fanatical Muslim. Even as a prince he had given evidence of bigotry. He wanted to prohibit the Hindus from bathing in the sacred tank at Thaneshwar. When he became king, he indulged in the policy of destroying temples and images, and building mosques in their places. He broke the sacred image of the *Jwalamukhi* temple at Nagarkot and gave its

pieces to butchers to use them as weights to weigh meat with. He destroyed many a temple at Mathura, Mandrail, Utagir, Narwar, Chanderi and other places. He ordered a Hindu, named Bodhan, to be put to death for no other offence than saying that "Hinduism is as true a religion as Islam." Sikandar did not permit Hindus to bathe in the Yamuna at bathing ghats and he prohibited barbers from shaving their beards. Like Firoz, he made an attempt to seduce Hindus and convert them to Islam. Such a policy was bound to alienate a large section of his subjects.

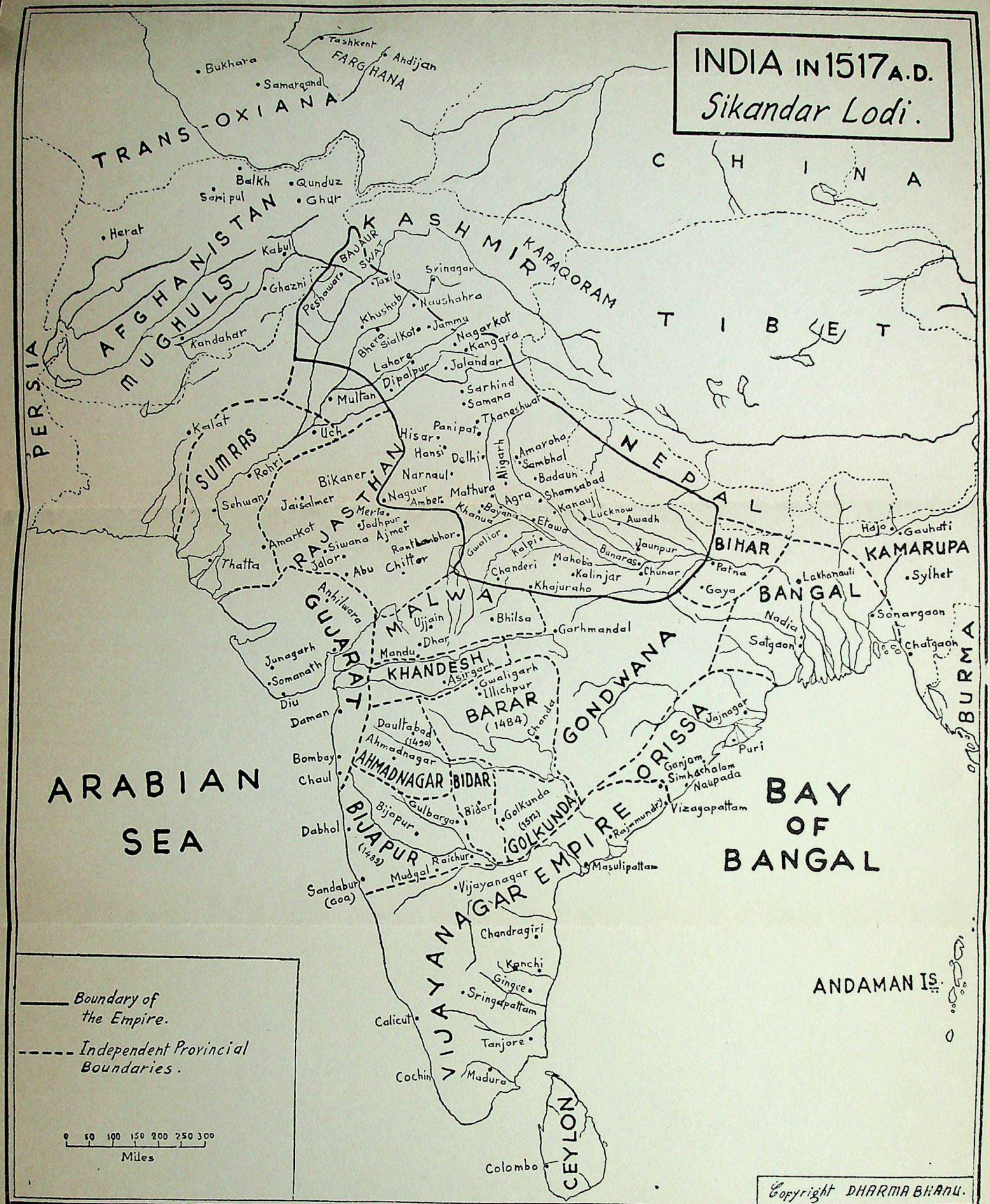
FOREIGN POLICY

Conquest of Bihar

Unlike his father, Sikandar was a man of lofty ambitions and had formed the design of conquering as many of the lost provinces of the Turkish Sultanate of Delhi as possible. His subjugation of his brother, Barbak Shah, and annexation of Jaunpur to his kingdom brought him into conflict with Bihar which was then considered a part of Bangal. Some of the zamindars of the Jaunpur province had intimate relations with the ex-king, Husain Shah Sharqi, who now lived in exile in Bihar. Sikandar was anxious to reduce these zamindars to complete submission. He, therefore, led an expedition against Phaphamau (near Allahabad) whose ruler, Raja Bhil, was a leader of the disaffected barons. Inspite of the Sultan's exertion, the raja could not be effectively subdued. On the other hand, in the expedition of 1494 the Sultan's army suffered greatly and a considerable number of his horses died in the campaign. The rebel rajas, who were in league with Husain Shah, invited him to invade Jaunpur and fight Sikandar, writing to him that nine-tenths of the horses of the Sultan's army had perished and that he was not in a position to offer resistance. Husain Shah, in response to this invitation, arrived from Bihar with a huge force. Sikandar proceeded to obstruct his passage and a severe battle was fought near Banaras which resulted in the defeat and flight of Husain. Sikandar pursued the retreating enemy and occupied Bihar which, thus, became a part of the Sultanate of Delhi. He stayed in Bihar for some time and raided Tirhut whose raja was obliged to submit and agreed to pay a tribute.

Treaty with Bangal

This invasion of Bihar was resented by Ala-ud-din Husain Shah, king of Bangal, who had treated Sultan Husain of Jaunpur



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as his protege and Bihar as a part of his kingdom. He sent his son, Daniyal, to oppose the progress of the Delhi army and the latter, under Mahmud Khan Lodi and Mubarak Khan Lohani, got ready to fight. But both, Sikandar and Ala-ud-din Husain, agreed to conclude a treaty without fighting. Each party bound itself not to invade the territory of the other. The king of Bangal promised, in addition, not to give shelter to Sikandar's enemies. Thus the eastern boundary of Sikandar's dominion was pushed to the western frontier of Bangal.

Conquest of Dholpur and other places

Sikandar was fired with the ambition of conquering Gwalior and Dholpur. After a stubborn fighting, which lasted for a considerable time, the Sultan succeeded in capturing Dholpur from its raja, Vinayak Deo, in 1502. But the conquest of Gwalior was beyond Sikandar's ability and strength. For several years in succession he led expeditions against Man Singh (1486—1516), the ruler of that great fortress and the country around it. He made Agra his capital in 1504, which had been a mere village and a dependancy of Bayana upto that year, in order to make it a military cantonment and a base of operations against Dholpur, Gwalior and Malwa. Years of exertion brought Mandrail, Utagir, Narwar[1] and Chanderi under the control of Delhi, but Gwalior could not be conquered and annexed. The Sultan had his designs on Malwa too; but he failed to acquire that prosperous kingdom. In 1510 he got Nagaur into his possession. These military achievements, though not very dazzling, considerably raised the prestige of Sikandar as a conqueror.

Death

The later years of the Sultan's reign were spent in aggressive wars against the Hindu chiefs of Gwalior, Dholpur, Narwar and some other principalities on the border of Rajasthan. Incessant military activity impaired his health. He was taken ill on his return from Bayána where he had gone in order to lead his projected expedition against Malwa. Despite all possible medical aid he died on November 21, 1517.

Estimate

Sikandar was the greatest king of the Lodi dynasty. Medieval

[1] Narwar fell in 1506 and along with it Padmawati, the famous capital of the Naga kings of the 4th century A.D. In 1512, Safdar Khan, a Lodi governor, built a fort there.

chroniclers bestow lavish praise on him and maintain that he was an extremely able, just, benevolent and God-fearing ruler. Their opinion has generally been endorsed by modern writers. A critical examination of the important events of his reign and the details of his administration and policy will, however, show that there were two facets of Sikandar's personality and character. He was, without doubt, a competent ruler; but his policy of religious persecution was calculated to alienate the sympathy of the vast majority of his subjects and neutralise the effect of his otherwise good administration.

Sikandar Lodi was gifted with kingly looks. He was tall, handsome and well built. Abdullah, the author of *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, says that Sikandar was so handsome in his boyhood that Shaikh Hasan, a well known Muslim divine, fell in love with him and the prince, who did not like the Shaikh's visits, one day singed his beard by holding his face forcibly near the fire. He was also very impressive in his bearing and daily conduct. Very highly educated, he was fond of literature and poetry and wrote verses in Persian under the *nom de plume* of 'Gul Rukh'. Born of a Hindu mother, he was anxious to show to his co-religionists that he was a *pakka* Muslim, not inferior in any way to those who belonged to pure Afghan lineage. He was thoroughly devoted to his religion, though he was not punctillious about saying the five daily prayers. Unlike his predecessors and against the common Islamic practice, he shaved his beard. He was fond of wine, though he did not drink it openly. Sikandar was very energetic, smart and full of activity. His whole reign was spent in incessant warfare. Of course, he was a good soldier and a successful commander.

In conformity with oriental practice, Sikandar dispensed a lot of charity. Cooked and uncooked food was distributed and large sums of money were spent in charity on Muslim festivals, such as, the anniversary of Muhammad's birth and death, Muharram, Shab-i-Barat and the two 'Ids. Stipends and subsistence allowances were granted to the *ulema* and to Muslim scholars and poor people. Like Firoz Tughluq, he used to arrange for dowry for the daughters of Muslim widows on the occasion of their marriage.

As a ruler, Sikandar attained more than ordinary success. While his father had been content with the position of *primus inter pares*, Sikandar's ideal of kingship was more akin to the Turkish and

Hindu conception of sovereignty than to that of the Afghans. He rightly believed that the Afghan conception of kingship could not be applicable to India, as India was not Afghanistan. In view of this, Sikandar attempted to undo the effects of divided sovereignty and brought his brother, Barbak Shah of Jaunpur, under his complete control. He curbed the individualistic tendencies of his Afghan nobles and compelled them to submit their accounts to the State audit. The highest of the Afghan peers were obliged to show formal respect to the king and to obey his orders. Not only did it become impossible for any noble, however highly placed he might be, to defy the Sultan's orders but none even dared to show disrespect to his *farmans* which had to be received with ceremony. Sikandar was, thus, able to infuse vigour and discipline in the administration. The prestige of the Sultanate as well as of the crown, which had fallen low during the days of the later Tughluqs, was restored.

The main achievement of the Sultan was the conquest and annexation of Bihar. Besides he conquered and annexed Dholpur, Narwar, Chanderi and a part of the kingdom of Gwalior.

Sikandar was a patron of learning. He was surrounded by scholars. By his orders a Sanskrit treatise on medicine was translated into Persian and given the name of *Farhang-i-Sikandari*. He patronised music and built many mosques. He made Agra his capital and beautified it with buildings, mosques and caravan-sarais. He built his father's tomb at Delhi.

The greatest blot on Sikandar's character as a ruler was his relentless bigotry. He had made it a rule to destroy Hindu temples during the course of his expeditions and to build mosques on their sites. He tried to repress Hinduism and exalt Islam in every possible way. Under him the Sultanate became as active a proselytising agency as in the time of Firoz Tughluq. His religious policy was, therefore, unwise and calculated to alienate the sympathy of his Hindu subjects and undermine his own authority.

IBRAHIM LODI, 1517—1526

His accession

After Sikandar's death his eldest son, Ibrahim, was elevated to the throne with the unanimous consent of the Afghan peers on November 21, 1517. He assumed the title of Ibrahim Shah.

FOREIGN POLICY

The subjugation of Gwalior

Ibrahim's foreign policy aimed at completing the work of conquest begun by his father. He decided to pursue Sikandar's designs of conquering and annexing Gwalior which had more than once defied the late Sultan's might. A convenient pretext was furnished by the ruler of that principality who gave shelter to Ibrahim's brother, Jalal Khan. Moreover, the valiant Man Singh, who had successfully resisted Sikandar, had died and was succeeded by his son, Vikramajit, who was much inferior to his father in ability and poetical wisdom. Ibrahim despatched Azam Humayun Sarwani at the head of an army of thirty thousand horse and three hundred elephants to besiege Gwalior. Another army was sent from Agra to co-operate with him in this difficult task. Azam Humayun threw himself with zeal into the work of besieging the giant fortress. As a result of the operations an important outwork was captured. The siege progressed satisfactorily and, eventually, the fortress surrendered. Vikramajit became a vassal of the Sultan of Delhi. This was Ibrahim's greatest achievement.

Defeat at the hands of Rana Sanga

Anxious to push his father's policy of aggressive conquest to its logical conclusion, Ibrahim undertook an expedition against Mewar, then the most notable State in Rajasthan. Its ruler was the valiant Rana Sangram Singh, popularly known as Sanga, without whose subjugation the Sultan could not hope to establish his supremacy in central Hindustan. So he despatched a powerful army under the command of Mian Makhan with whom were associated such well known Afghan officers as Husain Khan Zarbakhsh, Mian Khan-i-Khana Qarmali and Mian Maruf. The army of invasion numbered thirty thousand horse and three hundred elephants. But it suffered from dissension and disaffection among its chief officers. As it reached the frontier of Mewar, it was encountered and defeated by the Rana with great slaughter near Bakarol in the present Asind district of Mewar. Mian Makhan and his men fled in panic. But they were attacked by the Rajputs near Ghatoli (on the border of Bundi) and a considerable number of them was annihilated.[2]

[2] Babur mentions the defeat of Ibrahim in his Memoirs.

INDIA IN 1526 A.D.
Ibrahim Lodi.
TRANS-OXIANA
FARGHANA
Tashkent
Andijan
Bukhara
Samarqand
CHINA
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
Maimana
Sar-i-pul
Herat
AFGHANISTAN
Kabul
Ghazni
Peshawar
BAJAUR
SWAT
KASHMIR
KARAQORAM
Taxila
Srinagar
Naushahra
Khushab
Jammu
Bhara
Sialkot
Kangara
Lahore
Jalandar
TIBET
PERSIA
Kandahar
MUGHULS
Sarhind
Samana
Multan
Uch
Kalat
ARGHUNS
Panipat
Hansi
Delhi
Sombhal
NEPAL
Bikaner
Narnaul
Koil
Bodaun
Bahraich
Nagaur
Amber
Mathura
Agra
Sehwan
RAJASTHAN
Merta
Sambhar
Khanua
Etawa
Awadh
SINDH
Amarkot
Ajmer
Fatehpur
Sikri
Jaunpur
BIHAR
Hajo
KAMARUPA
Jalor
Gwalior
Kalpi
Orchha
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Patna
Lakhanauti
Thatta
Abu
Chittor
Gaya
Murshidabad
BANGAL
Sonargaon
Anhilwara
MALWA
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Garhmandal
Nadia
Chatgaon
GUJARAT
Dhar
Junagarh
Mandu
Somanath
KHANDESH
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Illichpur
BARAR
(1484)
Chanda
GONDWANA
BURMA
Daultabad
Ahmadnagar
(1490)
AHMADNAGAR
BIDAR
(1525)
ORISSA
Puri
Ganjam
Simhachalam
Naupada
Vizagapattam
Chaul
KONKAN
BIJAPUR
Sholapur
Bidar
Warangal
Golkunda
(1512)
GOLKUNDA
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Bijapur
(1489)
Gulbarga
EMPIRE
Raichur
Mudgal
Vijayanagar
Bezwada
Sandabur
(Panjim)
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
VIJAYANAGAR
Nellore
Penugonda
Kanchi
Gingee
Sringapattam
ANDAMAN Is.
Calicut
Tanjore
Madura
CEYLON
Colombo
Boundary of the Lodi Empire.
Independent Kingdoms.
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
Copyright DHARMA BHANU.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Suppression of Jalal Khan's rebellion

Ibrahim's reign was distracted by party rivalry. Soon after his accession, a party of selfish nobles advocated partition of the kingdom and managed to secure the elevation of Ibrahim's younger brother, Jalal Khan, to the throne of Jaunpur. The Sultan was compelled under pressure to agree to the partition. Even before Jalal could establish himself at Jaunpur, Ibrahim repented and one of his important nobles, Khan-i-Jahan Lohani, strongly condemned the foolish policy of dividing the kingdom and pressed for Jalal Khan's recall. Ibrahim entrusted the task to Haibat Khan. Having failed in the policy of persuading Jalal to return to Delhi, Haibat Khan had recourse to diplomacy. By a clever policy he seduced most of Jalal Khan's followers which compelled the latter to abandon Jaunpur and establish himself at Kalpi where he asserted his independence and assumed the title of king. He won over Azam Humayun Sarwani who was at the time besieging Kalinjar on behalf of his master, Sultan Ibrahim. Having united their forces, Jalal and Azam Humayun Sarwani attacked Awadh. Ibrahim was obliged to march against the rebels. But, fortunately Azam Humayun abandoned Jalal and returned to the side of Ibrahim. Jalal Khan, having thus been abandoned, returned towards Agra and attacked the garrison there. Ibrahim deputed Malik Adam to reinforce the garrison at Agra. This officer was able to persuade Jalal to give up his pretensions to sovereignty on the promise that he would be allowed to retain possession of Kalpi. Ibrahim, however, refused to ratify the terms and decided to bring about complete submission of his brother. Jalal had, therefore, to flee to take refuge with the raja of Gwalior. Ibrahim thought it necessary to attack that fortress with the double object of securing the person of his brother and occupying the fortress. As he approached near, Jalal Khan fled from Gwalior to Malwa. While the siege was in progress, Jalal, tired of the ill-treatment of the Sultan of Malwa, fled from there to the Gond principality of Garha Katanga. But the Gonds arrested him and sent him a prisoner to Ibrahim. The Sultan ordered him to be imprisoned in Hansi; but the prince was murdered on the way to that place. Ibrahim now became the undisputed ruler of the kingdom without any rival to intrigue against him.

Suppression of the nobles

Ibrahim's success in crushing Jalal Khan's rebellion and establishing his undisputed sway over the kingdom seems to have turned his head. He began to behave and act like an absolute despot. Imbued with the Turkish ideal of sovereignty, he made the impolitic declaration that 'kingship' knows no kingship : all the people were either the king's subjects or vassals. He discarded the Afghan tradition and compelled his nobles to stand in his court in an humble posture with their hands folded across their breasts. He imposed a rigid court ceremonial on the Afghan nobles who, being accustomed to treat the Sultan as one of themselves and to share the royal carpet with Bahlol and sometimes, even with Sikandar, would not brook this humiliation. They strongly resented the king's behaviour whose insolence and arrogance drove a few principal Afghan chiefs into rebellion. Mention has been made of Azam Humayun Sarwani's joining Jalal Khan and then abandoning him and making his peace with the Sultan. Ibrahim does not seem to have forgotten this temporary defection. Consequently, he summoned Azam Humayun and his son, Fateh Khan, from before the walls of Gwalior and threw him into prison. He had already imprisoned Main Bhova, a leading noble of Sikandar's time. This high-handed action incited Islam Khan, another son of Azam Humayun, to rebellion. He assumed the command of his father's army and attacked Ahmad Khan, governor of Agra. The Sultan obliged to collect his army in order to suppress this rebellion. At this very time two other important nobles, namely, Azam Humayun Lodi and Sayeed Khan Lodi, deserted the Sultan, marched away to their fief in Lucknow and prepared to join Islam Khan. An army sent by the Sultan against these two rebels was defeated and driven back with heavy losses. The Sultan became suspicious of other nobles and foolishly warned them that if they failed to crush the rebellion, they would be treated as rebels. He then took the field at the head of fifty thousand horse. The rebel nobles, too, gathered a huge army which swelled to forty thousand cavalry, a large body of infantry and five hundred elephants. A holy man, named Shaikh Raju Bukhari, tried to intervene and settle the dispute by negotiations, but without success. The rebels demanded the release of Azam Humayun Sarwani, which the Sultan refused to agree to. The result was a deadly contested battle. Ahmad Yadgar, the author of the *Makhzan-i-Afghana*, describes the battle in these words :

"Dead bodies, heap upon heap, covered the field; and the number of heads lying upon the ground was beyond the reach of recollection. Streams of blood ran over the plain and whenever, for a length of time, a fierce battle took place in Hindustan, the old men always observed that with this battle no other one was comparable; brothers fighting against brothers; fathers against sons; bows and arrows were laid aside, and the carnage carried on with daggers, swords, knives and javelines." At the end Ibrahim won. He defeated the rebels. Islam Khan was killed and Sayeed Khan was captured. The Sultan rewarded those who had remained loyal by conferring upon them the fiefs that had been in the possession of the rebels.

This success served to make Ibrahim more insolent than before and to encourage him to punish other disloyal barons. Unfortunately Azam Humayun Sarwani and some other nobles died in prison, causing an outburst of indignation and disaffection. Dariya Khan Lohani, governor of Bihar, Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, Mian Husain Qarmali and others rose into rebellion. The Sultan committed another act of folly by ordering the assassination of Shaikh Hasan Qarmali in Chanderi. This convinced the rebels that their lives and honour were not safe as long as Ibrahim remained on the throne. So they took steps to bring about the Sultan's deposition. Dariya Khan Lodi, the leader of the rebels, died at this time. But his son, Bahadur Khan, who held the fief of Bihar, proclaimed himself king under the title of Muhammad Shah. Many rebels now flocked to his standard and his army swelled to one lakh horse. He occupied the whole of the country from Bihar to Sambhal and was joined by Nasir Khan Lohani, the governor of Ghazipur.

The Panjab, too, revolted under its governor Daulat Khan Lodi. His son, Ghazi Khan, escaped from Delhi and reported to his father that if Ibrahim succeeded in putting down the rebellion in Bihar he would deprive him of Lahore. In view of this fear Daulat Khan assumed virtual independence and opened negotiations with Babur, the king of Kabul, whom he invited to invade India and overthrow Ibrahim. This proposal was accepted by Babur who was himself desirous of conquering Hindustan. Daulat Khan Lodi seems to have believed that Babur would come, plunder the country and go back and thus enable him (Daulat Khan Lodi) to establish his power in the Panjab. He was, however, mistaken. At this very time another ambitious Lodi chief, named Alam Khan, an uncle of

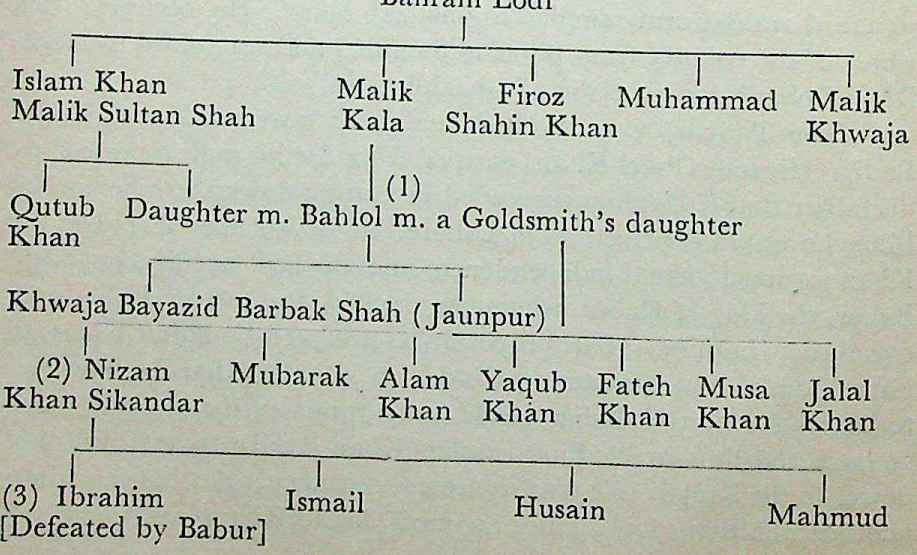
Ibrahim, also appeared on the scene. He was ambitious of becoming king of Delhi and he opened negotiations with Babur. The result was the famous battle of Panipat on April 21, 1526, in which Ibrahim Lodi was defeated and killed. With his death came the end of the Sultanate of Delhi.

His estimate

Though not devoid of ability and intelligence, Ibrahim Lodi proved a sad failure. He was a brave and fearless soldier and a fairly successful commander. He seems to have been honest and laborious. From the meagre account of the medieval chronicles it is clear that his private life was good and that he applied himself to the business of the State with zest. He administered justice as well as any of his predecessors. But, though himself an Afghan, he was ignorant of the character and sentiment of his race. He foolishly abandoned the sagacious policy of his father and grandfather and tried to impose a rigorous discipline and strict court ceremonial on his peers who were fierce democrats and treated the king as nothing more than the noble among the nobles. By his policy of playing the king and insolently punishing those who disregarded his orders, he drove them into rebellion. He thus dug the very foundation of the State and lost his throne and life.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Lodi Dynasty



13

THE PROVINCIAL KINGDOMS

THE NORTHERN INDIA

Jaunpur

Within a few years of the death of Firoz Tughluq some of the provinces of the Sultanate of Delhi asserted their independence and laid the foundation of new ruling dynasties. One of the earliest to do so was Jaunpur, The town of Jaunpur was founded by Firoz Tughluq and named after his cousin, Jauna Khan *alias* Muhammad bin Tughluq. An eunuch, Malik Sarwar, and entitled Sultan-ush-Sharq, was its last governor who threw off allegiance to Delhi during the confusion caused by Timur's invasion and set himself up as a *de facto* king. He did not assume the royal title; but, for all practical purposes, acted as an independent ruler. His dynasty is known after his title as the Sharqi dynasty. Sarwar-ul-mulk extended his authority over Awadh and over a part of the Doab as far as the modern city of Aligarh. He also brought Tirhut and Bihar under his control. He died in 1399 and was succeeded by his adopted son, Malik Qaranphul, who assumed the title of Mubarak Shah. This man was, thus, the first member of the Sharqi dynasty to assume the title of king and to strike coins and cause the *khutba* to be read in his name. During his reign Mallu Iqbal of Delhi undertook an expedition to recover Jaunpur, but he failed to do so. The seed of enmity between Delhi and Jaunpur was, thus, sown in 1401, which led to a prolonged contest between the two ruling houses. Mubarak Shah died in 1402 and was succeeded by his younger brother, who is known to history as Ibrahim Shah.

Ibrahim was the greatest king of the Sharqi dynasty. He ruled for about thirty-four years. He was a cultured prince and was a great patron of learning. He established schools and colleges and endowed them liberally from State funds. Having invited scholars and theologians from various parts of the country, he granted them subsistence allowances and extended to them State patronage in every possible manner. The result was that many scholarly works on

Islamic theology and law and other subjects were produced. The city of Jaunpur was adorned by him with beautiful buildings specially mosques, the most brilliant specimen of which is the famous Atala Masjid. Under him Jaunpur evolved a distinct architecture of its own which is known by the name of the Sharqi style of architecture. The Jaunpur mosques are beautiful to look at, have no minarets of the usual type and bear traces of Hindu influence. He was also fond of music and other fine arts. Owing to its cultural and educational activities of a high order, Jaunpur earned under this king the title of 'Shiraz of India'.

During Ibrahim's reign the relations between Jaunpur and Delhi became bitter. Mahmud Tughluq, who fled to Jaunpur from the tyranny of Mallu, was not treated as a sovereign by Ibrahim and had to satisfy his spite by taking forcible possession of the district of Kanauj which was a part of the kingdom of Jaunpur. Subsequently, Ibrahim came into conflict with Khizr Khan who had become the ruler of Delhi. In 1407, Ibrahim attempted to expel Mahmud from Kanauj which had been taken possession of by the latter after his return from Jaunpur. Ibrahim's foreign policy was ambitious and aggressive. He invaded Bangal, but failed to conquer it. He died in 1436 and was succeeded by his son, Mahmud Shah. This ruler conquered the district of Chunar. But he failed to capture Kalpi. He invaded Delhi, but was defeated by Bahlol Lodi. He died in 1475. His son, Bhikhan, now sat on the throne under the title of Muhammad Shah. He was an unscrupulous ruler and managed to pick a quarrel with his nobles who murdered him and raised his brother, Husain Shah, to the throne. Husain Shah was the last ruler of the Sharqi dynasty. During his reign, the rivalry between Delhi and Jaunpur came to a head and a prolonged war ensued. Husain concluded in 1458 a four years' truce with Bahlol Lodi. During this period he suppressed a rising of the zamindars in Tirhut and carried out a plundering raid into Orissa, compelling the Raja to pay him a large sum of money as indemnity. In 1466 he conducted an expedition against Gwalior, but failed to capture that fortress. Raja Man Singh, however, was obliged to pay him a heavy indemnity. Meanwhile, there was a recrudescence of hostilities between Jaunpur and Delhi. Bahlol Lodi defeated him and compelled him to take shelter in Bihar. He subjugated the whole of Jaunpur and placed his eldest son, Barbak Shah, on its throne. From his

retreat in Bihar, Husain continued to embarrass the ruler of Delhi by his relentless intrigues and by fomenting rebellions among the zamindars of the Jaunpur kingdom. Sikandar Lodi, Bahlol's successor, had, therefore, to take stern measures and to annex Jaunpur permanently to the Sultanate of Delhi. Husain died in exile in Bihar in 1500 A.D. and with his death the Sharqi ruling family came to an end. The Sharqi dynasty reigned in Jaunpur for about eighty-five years. The rule of this family fostered material prosperity and encouraged cultural and educational activities. Jaunpur attained a high place among the provincial kingdoms in the country.

Malwa

The province of Malwa, which was conquered by Ala-ud-din Khalji in 1305, remained a part of the Sultanate of Delhi till 1398. Its governor, Dilawar Khan Ghuri, who was probably appointed by Firoz Tughluq, threw off his allegiance to Delhi after the invasion of Timur and became a *de facto* monarch. But, like Malik-ush-Sharq, he did not formally assume the title of king. He died in 1406 and was succeeded by his son, Alp Khan, who ascended the throne under the title of Hushang Shah. The new king was brave, valorous and full of the spirit of adventure. He took delight in aggressive warfare which continued throughout his reign. In 1422 he made a surprise attack on Orissa and brought from there a huge booty which included seventy-five elephants. Next, he invaded Kherla, occupied it and carried off its raja as a prisoner. He fought with the Sultans of Delhi, Jaunpur, Gujarat and also with the Bahamani ruler of the Dakhin. The aggressive warfare did not bring much gain to Malwa nor did it enhance the reputation of its ruler. Worn out by constant warfare, Hushang Shah died on July 6, 1435. He was succeeded by his son, Ghazi Khan, who assumed the title of Muhammad Shah. He was an utterly incompetent ruler and paid little attention to the business of the State. He was deposed by his minister, Mahmud Khan, who usurped the throne in May 1436. Mahmud assumed the title of Shah and founded a new dynasty known as the Khalji dynasty of Malwa. His authority was, however, challenged by a party of his nobles who refused to acknowledge him as their king. Ahmad Shah I of Gujarat, also, took up the cause of the late Muhammad Shah's son; but Mahmud Khalji succeeded in overcoming the opposition of his enemies. He was a brave soldier and fought against Ahmad Shah I of Gujarat, Muhammad

Shah of Delhi, Muhammad Shah III Bahamani and Rana Kumbha of Mewar. The war between him and Rana Kumbha of Mewar seems to have been indecisive, as both sides claimed success and built 'towers of victory'. Mahmud was the ablest among the Muslim rulers of Malwa. He greatly enlarged his dominion by conquests, extended it to Satpura Range in the south, to the frontier of Gujarat in the west, to Bundelkhand in the east and to Mewar and Bundi on the north. He was recognised Sultan by the Khalifa of Egypt. He also received a mission from Sultan Abu Sa'id of that country. He died on the 1st of June, 1469. According to Farishta, "he was polite, brave, just and learned, and during his reign his subjects, Muhammadan as well as Hindus, were happy and maintained a friendly intercourse with each other. Scarcely a year passed when he did not take the field, so that his tent became his home and the field of battle his resting place. His leisure hours were devoted to hearing the histories and memoirs of the courts of different kings of the world." His reign lasted for thirty-four years.

The next ruler was Ghiyas-ud-din, who succeeded his father, Mahmud, in 1469. He was a religious-minded prince and devoted much of his time to prayers. He even refrained from liquor and the articles of food prohibited by his religion. He loved peace but his domestic life was unhappy owing to a quarrel between his sons. He was poisoned by his eldest son, Nasir-ud-din, who seized the throne in 1500. The new king was a voluptuary and a tyrant. It is said that there were 15,000 women in his harem. He was addicted to drinking too. One day, in a fit of drunkenness, he fell into a lake and was drowned in 1510. His second son ascended the throne under the title of Mahmud II. He called Medini Rai, a powerful Rajput chief of Chanderi, to crush his disloyal nobles and appointed him prime minister. The predominance of the Rajputs at the court excited the jealousy of his Muslim nobles who sought the assistance of Muzaffar Shah II of Gujarat against the powerful minister; but Medini Rai inflicted a defeat on Mahmud himself with the help of Rana Sanga. In this war with Chittor, Mahmud II was taken a prisoner. But the Rana treated him with great generosity and restored his kingdom to him. Inspite of the generous restoration by the Sisodia chief, the power and prestige of the kingdom of Malwa could not be revived and the hostility between Malwa and Mewar did not come to an end. The unwise Mahmud,

who did not appreciate the Rana's act of magnanimity, led an expedition against Ratna Singh, the successor of Sanga. Rana Ratna Singh retaliated and invaded Malwa, and Mahmud was defeated. Next, Mahmud incurred the hostility of Sultan Bahadur Shah of Gujarat by giving shelter to the latter's younger brother, Chand Khan. Bahadur Shah captured Mandu on 17th March, 1531, and the independence of Malwa came to an end (1531). The kingdom of Malwa now became a part of Gujarat till it was invaded by Humayun, the second Mughul ruler of Delhi, in 1535. It remained a province of the Delhi empire under Humayun and Sher Shah. The latter appointed his commander Shujaat Khan its governor. On Shujaat Khan's death, his son, Baz Bahadur, became the governor. Baz Bahadur assumed the title of Sultan during the confusion that followed the death of Islam Shah Sur. In 1562 Baz Bahadur was defeated by Akbar and Malwa was annexed to the Mughal empire.

Gujarat

The wealthy province of Gujarat was conquered by Ala-ud-din Khalji and annexed to the Sultanate of Delhi in 1297. Since that date till 1401 it remained a province of the kingdom of Delhi. In 1391 Zafar Khan, the son of a Rajput convert, was appointed its governor by Muhammad Shah Tughluq II, the youngest son of Firoz Tughluq. Taking advantage of the weakness of the central authority and the confusion caused by Timur's invasion, he set himself up as an independent ruler in 1401. He was, however, temporarily deposed by his rebellious son, Tatar Khan, who proclaimed himself king under the title of Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Shah; but he was put to death by his uncle, Shams Khan. Zafar Khan now recovered his throne and ruled up to 1411 as Sultan Muzaffar Shah. Muzaffar Shah's reign was marked by a conflict between Gujarat and Malwa. The ruler of Malwa, Husang Shah, was defeated and Muzaffar Shah captured Dhar. He died in June 1411, and was succeeded by his grandson, Ahmad Shah. The new ruler was one of the greatest Sultans of Gujarat. He is rightly regarded as the founder of the independence of that kingdom. He ruled for over thirty-one years from 1411 to 1442. He was an ambitious and enterprising prince and extended his dominions by conquest. He fought against the Sultan of Malwa and the rulers of Asirgarh, Rajasthan and other neighbouring states. Endowed with great

energy and ambition, he reorganised the administration and built the modern city of Ahmadabad on the site of the old town of Asawal and transferred his capital to that place. Here he erected several stately buildings including the grand mosque which exists even today. He was a successful ruler and is celebrated in the history of the kingdom for his justice, liberality and munificence. He was, however, a religious fanatic and was intolerant towards his non-Muslim subjects. He died on August 16, 1442. The throne now passed to his eldest son, Muhammad Shah, who reigned from 1442 to 1451. Then came two weak rulers, Qutub-ud-din Ahmad and Daud. Daud was an incompetent ruler and was deposed by his nobles within a few days of his accession. The nobles now raised to the throne a grandson of Ahmad Shah, Abul Fateh Khan, who assumed the title of Mahmud Shah. He is popularly known as Mahmud Begarha.

Mahmud Begarha was the greatest king of his dynasty. He was a valiant soldier, a great conqueror and a successful administrator. He was almost the mountain of a man with a long moustache and stately person having an inordinate appetite. According to a Gujarati historian of standard authority, Mahmud Begarha "added glory and lustre to the kingdom of Gujarat and was the best of all the Gujarat kings, including those who preceded, and all who succeeded him; and whether for abounding justice and generosity.....for the diffusion of the laws of Islam and of Musalmans, for soundness in judgment, alike in boyhood, in manhood and in old age, for power, for valour and for victory, he was a pattern of excellence." He ruled for fifty-three years. His first work was to put down his hostile courtiers who wanted to raise his brother, Hasan Khan, to the throne. Next, he embarked on a career of conquests. He defeated the Sumra and Sodha chiefs of Kutch and conquered the forts of Jaunagarh and Champaner. He punished the pirates of Jagat (Dwarika). He took up the cause of Nizam Shah Bahamani against Mahmud Khalji of Malwa whom he defeated. The extent of the Gujarat kingdom reached its extreme limits under him. Towards the end of his reign he led an expedition, in alliance with the Sultan of Egypt, against the Portuguese who had monopolised lucrative trade in the Indian seas. The Egyptian fleet was commanded by Amir Husain, the Kurd governor of Jedda; while the Indian contingent was under the charge of Malik Ayaz. A Portuguese squadron was defeated near Chaul in 1508; but the Portuguese recovered their loss in 1509 and inflicted a

crushing defeat on the allied fleet near Diu. This success enabled the Portuguese to recover their naval supremacy on the sea coast. Mahmud Begarha was obliged to grant them a site for a factory at Diu. Mahmud died in November 1511, and was succeeded by his son, Muzaffar II. The new ruler fought with the Rajputs under Medini Rai and restored Mahmud Khalji of Malwa to the throne. He died in April 1526. Then followed two brief reigns of Sikandar and Mahmud II who were incompetent rulers and ruled for a few months each. In July 1526, Bahadur Shah, another son of Muzaffar II, became king.

Bahadur Shah, who ruled from 1526 to 1537, was one of the ablest rulers of his time. Like his grandfather, Mahmud Begarha, he was endowed with courage, valour and love of enterprise. Immediately after his accession, he embarked on a career of conquest. Having defeated Mahmud II of Malwa, he annexed that kingdom to Gujarat in 1531. Next, he invaded Mewar and stormed the great fortress of Chittor in 1531. But he committed the mistake of giving shelter to Humayun's rebellious cousins which involved him in a conflict with the Mughul empire. Humayun defeated him and occupied Malwa and, subsequently, drove him away from Gujarat also. But Humayun had to withdraw his troops. Bahadur now regained his kingdom and formed the project of expelling the Portuguese from Gujarat, as they had refused to give him help against Humayun. The portuguese governor, Nunho da Cunha, beguiled him on board his ship in February 1537 and had him treacherously drowned in the sea. After his death there was a series of weak rulers in Gujarat. During their reign the administration was weak and there was confusion throughout the kingdom. Taking advantage of this, Akbar, the great Mughul emperor, conquered Gujarat, and annexed it to his empire in 1572.

Bangal

Bangal was conquered and brought under the Sultanate of Delhi by Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji during the last decade of the 12th century A.D. But after his death, his successors tried to assert their independence. They were encouraged in their design, as the province was rich and was far away from Delhi, and the people, who were anxious to enjoy local autonomy, probably supported them. Balban compelled Bangal to accept the suzerainty of Delhi and appointed his son, Bughra Khan, its governor. But, after his death, Bughra asserted his independence. Ghiyas-ud-din

Tughluq tried to solve the problem by partitioning Bangal into three independent administrative divisions. These were Lakhanauti, Satgaon and Sonargaon. Even this did not help to prevent the Bangalis from becoming rebellious. Muhammad bin Tughluq had to take steps to assert the supremacy of Delhi. But, even before his death, the province again cut off its connection with Delhi. In 1345, Haji Iliyas undid the partition and became the ruler of united Bangal under the title of Shamsh-ud-din Iliyas Shah. He was an enterprising ruler and a great fighter. He raided Orissa and Tirhut and exacted tributes from them. He even tried to encroach upon the territory of Delhi. Firoz Tughluq was, consequently, obliged to lead an expedition to punish him. But he failed to recover Bangal. Iliyas died in 1357 after a prosperous reign which lasted for about twelve years.

Iliyas's son, Sikandar, now became king in 1357. During his reign Firoz Tughluq again made an attempt to reduce Bangal to submission, but he failed to do so. Sikandar died in 1393, after a prosperous reign of about thirty-six years. He was succeeded by Ghiyas-ud-din Azam who was an able ruler. He is said to have been devoted to his religion and was fond of Persian literature. He established friendly relations with China. He died in 1410. His son, Saif-ud-din Hamza Shah, now became king. But he was a weak ruler. During his time Raja Ganesh, a Brahman zamindar of Bhaturia and Dinajpur, acquired ascendancy at his court, as the result of which the Sultan was relegated to the position of a nominal ruler. Hamza Shah died after a reign of one year and a few months. We are told by local historians that Raja Ganesh set himself up as an independent king. Subsequently, he abdicated in favour of his son, Jadu, who, some years after his accession, turned a Muslim and assumed the title of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Shah. He died in 1431. Then came to the throne his son, named Shamsh-ud-din Ahmad, who reigned upto 1442. He was an unpopular ruler, and during his reign, power was usurped by turbulent nobles. After him there were two puppet rulers, one after the other, who ruled only for a brief period. The throne then passed to Nasir-ud-din, a grandson of Haji Iliyas. This ruler assumed the high-sounding title of Nasir-ud-din Abul Muzaffar Mahmud Shah. He reigned peacefully for seventeen years and built a few notable buildings at Gaur and a mosque at Satgaon. He died in 1460 and was succeeded by his son,

Rukn-ud-din Barbak Shah, who was a good ruler. In 1461 his son, Shamsh-ud-din Yusuf Shah, became king. He was a virtuous and learned monarch. He died in 1481, and his son, Sikandar II, became king. As he was a man of defective intellect, he was deposed in favour of Jalal-ud-din Fateh Shah, a son of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud. He was murdered in 1486 by his Abyssinian slaves whose leader captured the throne and set himself up as Barbak Shah. Confusion now entered the affairs of Bangal and lasted for some time till order was restored by Indil Khan, a courtier who became king under the title of Saif-ud-din Firoz. He is said to have been an able administrator and a popular king. He died in 1489 and was succeeded by his son, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah II. He was, however, murdered by an ambitious Abyssinian, named Sidi Badr, who seized the throne and assumed the title of Shamsh-ud-din Abu Nasr Muzaffar Shah. He was a tyrant. Supported by his fellow Abyssinians, he committed great oppression upon the people. The nobles rose against him and besieged him in Gaur. He died during the course of the siege. The nobles now gave the throne to Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah in 1493. This king laid the foundation of a new dynasty which ruled for about fifty years and carried out useful measures for the welfare of the people. One of his most important tasks was to suppress the palace guards and to expel the Abyssinians from the kingdom. In 1494 he gave shelter to Sultan Husain of Jaunpur. This brought him into conflict with Sikandar Lodi with whom he was obliged to make peace which fixed the eastern frontier of Bihar to be the boundary between the two kingdoms. Ala-ud-din Husain Shah extended the boundary of his kingdom as far as the borders of Orissa. He captured Magadha and Kamatapur in Kooch Bihar. He died in 1518 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Nasib Khan, who assumed the title of Nasir-ud-din Nusrat Shah. Like his father, he, too, was a good and successful ruler. He defeated the king of Tirhut and appointed his own governor to that territory. Nusrat was a patron of literature and art. Under his patronage the *Mahabharata* was translated into Bangali. He built the two famous mosques, Bara Sona Masjid and Qadam Rasul, at Gaur. He died in 1533 and was succeeded by his son, Ala-ud-din Firoz Shah. This king's reign lasted for about three months. He was killed by his uncle, Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud Shah, who proved to be the last king of the dynasty. Sher Shah drove him away from Bangal and occupied the province in 1538.

Kashmir

The first Muslim Sultan of Kashmir was Shamsh-ud-din Shah who seized the throne of that country in 1339. His original name was Shah Mirza and he was an adventurer from Swat. He had taken service under the last Hindu ruler of Kashmir and had increased his power so considerably that he set aside the descendants of the Raja and himself became king. He is said to have been a wise and generous monarch. He died in 1349. His four sons, Jamshid, Ala-ud-din, Shihab-ud-din, and Qutub-ud-din, then ruled over Kashmir, one after another, for about forty-six years. After Qutub-ud-din's death his son, Sikandar, came to the throne in 1394. It was during his time that Timur invaded northern India; but, fortunately, Kashmir was saved from the terrible experience of the north-western India. Sikandar was a powerful ruler and a patron of Islamic learning. Many scholars from Persia, Arabia and Mesopotamia found a cordial welcome at his court. But he was a religious bigot and was bitterly opposed to the religion of his subjects. He persecuted the Hindus and either converted or drove away Brahmans from Kashmir, allowing only eleven families to remain there. He destroyed many temples, the most important of which was the Martand temple at Mattan. This giant work of art stands in its half-burnt and ruined condition even now, and relates, by its presence, the story of the iconoclastic zeal of the Sultan. For this fanaticism he earned the title of Sikandar the *But-shikan* or 'Idol-breaker'. After a reign of twenty-two years and nine months he died in 1416 and was succeeded by his son, Ali Shah. His reign lasted for a few years. He was deposed by his brother, Shah Khan, who ascended the throne in June 1420, and assumed the title of Żain-ul-Abidin. Zain-ul-Abidin was the greatest Sultan of Kashmir. He was so liberal, enlightened and benevolent that he has been called 'the Akbar of Kashmir'. He allowed the Kashmiri pandit families that had been banished by Sikandar to return to their homes. He admitted Hindu scholars to his society and abolished the hated *jizya*. He prohibited cow-slaughter and gave perfect religious freedom to all his subjects. Zain-ul-Abidin was a good scholar of Persian, Hindi and Tibetan, besides Kashmiri. He was a patron of literature and art, painting and music. He ordered the translation of the *Mahabharata* and the *Rajatarangini* into Persian. Similarly, several notable Arabic and Persian books were translated into Hindi. He took steps for the establishment of complete law and

order and put down highway robbery. He reduced the burden of taxation on his subjects and reformed the currency. He regulated the prices of commodities and established his control over the market. Kashmir enjoyed extraordinary prosperity during his reign. He died towards the end of 1470 and was succeeded by his son, Haidar Shah.

Haidar Shah seems to have been a fairly competent ruler. His successors, however, were weak and incompetent. The result was maladministration and confusion. Several parties sprang up and contended with one another for supremacy. In 1540 Mirza Haidar, a relative of Babur, conquered Kashmir. Though acting as a representative of Humayun, Mirza Haidar, in practice, was an independent king. In 1551 he was defeated and driven out by the Kashmiri nobles. But the quarrel between the nobles continued as before. In 1555 the Chakk tribe acquired ascendancy and one of its members became king of Kashmir. It was conquered by Akbar and annexed to the Mughul empire in 1586.

Orissa

The kingdom of Orissa, which extended from the mouth of the Ganga to that of the Godavari in the south, was consolidated by Anantavarman Choda Ganga, whose reign lasted for about seventy years (*cir.* 1076-1148). He was a remarkable ruler. Besides being a valiant soldier and conqueror, he was a patron of religion and of Sanskrit and Telugu literatures. He built the famous Jagannath temple at Puri. His notable successor was Narasimha I (1238-64). He and his successor successfully repelled the Turkish invaders and protected their kingdom. After his death his dynasty began to decline. It was supplanted in or about 1434 by a new dynasty which ruled over Orissa for more than a century.

The founder of this new dynasty was Kapilendra, who was a ruler of ability and courage. He successfully defended his kingdom from the aggressions of the Bahamani rulers and those of Vijayanagar. The next ruler was Purushottama (1470-97), during whose reign the kingdom began to decline and lost the southern half of its territory from the Godavari downwards. He was succeeded by his son, Prataprudra (1496-1540), who was obliged to cede a part of his territory south of the Godavari to the king of Vijayanagar. Orissa was also invaded by the Sultan of Golkunda in 1522 and Prataprudra was obliged to submit to humiliating terms. About 1441-42 A.D. Kapilendra's dynasty was supplanted by the Bhoi dynasty whose

founder, Govind, belonged to the Bhoi or writer caste. The Bhoi dynasty ruled upto 1559 when it was overthrown by Mukunda Harichandana. He tried to save Orissa from Muslim invaders. He died in 1568. The kingdom of Orissa was now coveted by the Mughuls as well as by the Kararani Sultans of Bangal. In 1568 it was conquered and annexed to Bangal by Sulaiman, the king of Bangal.

Kamarupa and Assam

In the early years of the thirteenth century there were a number of independent principalities in the Brahmaputra valley, the most important among which was the kingdom of Kamarupa. It was then known as the kingdom of Kamata. It was hemmed in by the Ahoms in the east and the Sultans of Bangal in the west. In the fifteenth century the Khens established their rule over Kamarupa and made Kamatapur, a few miles to the south of Kooch Bihar, their capital. The last ruler of this dynasty, named Nilambar, was overthrown by Ala-ud-din Husain Shah of Bangal in or about 1498. A short time after, Vishasinha of the Koch tribe set himself up as the ruler of Kamarupa, in 1515. The greatest Koch ruler was Nara Narayan. During his reign the kingdom of Kamata reached its nadir of greatness; but, unfortunately, there was dissension between the king and his nobles as the result of which the kingdom was divided. Nara Narayan was obliged to cede a portion of Kamarupa to his nephew, Raghudeva. The two parts of the kingdom were known as Kooch Bihar and Koch Hajo respectively. The partition led to a perpetual hostility between them with the result that their neighbours, the Ahoms and the Muslims, intervened. In 1639 the western portion of Kamarupa came under the supremacy of the Muslims and the eastern portion under that of the Ahoms.

In or about 1215 Assam passed under the sway of a section of the Ahoms who belonged to the Shan tribe. The dynasty thus established ruled over that province for six hundred years. In their prosperous days the Ahoms successfully prevented Kamarupa and Bangal from extending eastward; but when they conquered Kamarupa and made it a part of their kingdom, they became exposed to attacks from the Sultans of Bangal. Ala-ud-din Husain led an expedition into Assam, but he failed to conquer it. The result was enmity between the Ahoms and the Sultans of Bangal which lasted for more than thirty years. After the Sultan of Bangal had failed against the Ahoms, some local Muhammadans in Assam raised the

standard of rebellion, but they, too, could not establish Muslim supremacy there. Assam and Kamarupa, thus, continued to be under the rule of the Ahoms throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi.

Rajasthan

There were three important independent States in Rajasthan during this period. They were Mewar (modern Udaipur), Marwar and Amber.

Mewar. The history of Mewar goes back to far off antiquity. According to Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha, the rule of the Sisodia Guhilot family over Chittor can be traced to the 6th century A.D. Scientific research has shown that Guhilot Rajputs were the rulers of Mewar at least in the 7th century A.D. Ala-ud-din Khalji captured Chittor, the capital of Mewar, in 1303; but a portion of the State remained in the hands of the Guhilots. The capital, too, was recovered by Rana Hamir who retrieved the honour of his race and died in 1364. He was succeeded by Kshetra Singh who was the worthy son of a worthy father. He was killed in a family quarrel about 1382. Then came his son, Lakha, and, after him, Mokala who was assassinated in 1431. Mokala's successor was the famous Rana Kumbha Karan. He was one of the greatest rulers of Mewar and one of the most famous and successful sovereigns in the entire country. He was a brave soldier and first-rate general. Having increased his army and fortified his frontiers by building numerous forts, among which Kumbhalgarh is the most famous, he carried on an incessant warfare against the Sultans of Malwa and Gujarat. He built the Tower of Victory or Vijaya Stambha at Chittor in commemmoration of his success against Malwa. Rana Kumbha was a great patron of learning and was himself a scholar of no mean ability. Mewar reached the zenith of its glory under Rana Sanga (1509-28) who has been described as 'the fragment of a soldier' having the marks of eighty wounds on his body from sword or lance and being crippled in one leg, one eye and one arm. Sanga was endowed with remarkable military ability. He fought successfully against Malwa, Delhi and Gujarat. His supremacy was recognised by the rulers of the other Rajput states in Rajasthan. He defeated and captured Mahmud II of Malwa and generously restored his kingdom to him. He came into conflict with Babur and was defeated in a battle with him at Khanua in 1527. But Babur shrank from the task of conquering

Mewar. Akbar, too, failed to annex it. Mewar recognised the Mughul suzerainty in the time of Jahangir.

Marwar. The next important state in Rajasthan was Marwar, known in our day as Jodhpur. It was ruled over by the Rathors who descended from the ancient Rashtrakutas. The modern history of Marwar dates from the time of Chunda who ruled from 1394 to 1421. His successor was the famous Jodha who built the fort of Jodhpur, founded a town there and made it his capital. He built another important fort, namely, that of Mandor. His reign lasted for about fifty years, from 1438 to 1488. One of his sons, named Bika, founded the present state of Bikaner about 1464. The most important ruler of Marwar during our period was Maldeva (1532-62) under whom the power of the dynasty reached its height. Maldeva came into conflict with Sher Shah who was obliged to make peace with the Rathor king.

Ambar. The State of Amber, known now-a-days as Jaipur State, was ruled by the Kachhawaha Rajputs who belonged to the solar dynasty and traced their descent from Shri Ram Chandra of Ayodhya. The State of Amber was founded, according to Colonel James Tod, in the 10th century A.D. In the early days of its history, it seems to have been under the suzerainty of Mewar. It acquired some political importance in the 14th century. But during the Mughul age, Amber became the first state in Rajasthan. Its ruler, Bharmal, recognised the overlordship of Akbar in 1561.

THE SOUTHERN INDIA

Khandesh

Situated in the valley of the river Tapti, Khandesh was a province of the Sultanate of Delhi till the end of Firoz Tughluq's reign. Its last governor, Malik Raja Faruqi, who was appointed by Firoz Tughluq, set himself up as an independent ruler during the period of confusion following Firoz's death. He came into clash with Muzaffar Shah I of Gujarat, but was defeated by him. He was reputed to be a kind-hearted ruler. He died on 29th April, 1399, and was succeeded by his son, Malik Nasir. He defeated his brother, Hasan, and captured the fortress of Asirgarh from its Hindu chieftain. He was, however, compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of Ahmad Shah of Gujarat. He also suffered defeat in a battle with

Ala-ud-din Ahmad of the Bahamani kingdom. After his death, which occurred in 1438, there were, one after another, two weak Sultans. In 1457 the throne of Khandesh passed to Adil Khan II who was an able and enterprising king. He brought Gondwana under his possession and reformed the administration of his kingdom. He died in 1501 and was succeeded by his brother, Daud. This ruler died in 1508. Then his son, Ghazi Khan, came to the throne, but he was poisoned within ten days of his accession. There ensued a period of confusion in Khandesh and its neighbours, the Sultans of Gulbarga and Gujarat, endeavoured to fish in troubled waters at its expense. Eventually, Adil Khan I became king of Khandesh. He was a nominee of Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat who acquired considerable influence in the internal affairs of Khandesh. Adil died in 1520. His successors were as weak as he himself was. They could not save the kingdom from the encroachments of the neighbouring rulers. Khandesh was annexed by Akbar in 1601.

The Bahamani kingdom

During the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq some of the Dakhin nobles rose in rebellion against his oppressive policy, seized the city of Daultabad and proclaimed one of themselves, named Ismail Mukh, king under the title of Nasir-ud-din Shah. Being a man of advanced age and unfit to be the ruler of a new kingdom which needed greater ability and exertion than that he could command, Nasir-ud-din resigned the throne. The nobles now chose Hasan who became king under the title of Abul Muzaffar Ala-ud-din Bahaman Shah on the 3rd August, 1347. The story, related by Farishta, that Hasan was in his early days the menial servant of a Brahman, named Gangoo, who treated him well and prophesied his rise to power, whence in gratitude he assumed the title of Bahamani, has been rejected by modern research as gossip. Hasan claimed descent from the famous Persian hero Bahaman, son of Isfandiyar, and that was why he took up the title of Bahaman Shah, and not from the name of his so-called Brahman master and benefactor.

Hasan proved to be a powerful ruler. He was determined to extend the boundaries of his small principality. As the result of incessant warfare, he succeeded in extending its limits from the Wainganga river in the north to the Krishna in the south, and from Daultabad in the west to Bhongir in the east. He established an efficient administration at his capital, Gulbarga, and divided his kingdom into

four provinces (*tarafs*), namely, Gulbarga, Daultabad, Barar and Bidar. Each province was under a governor who had an army and appointed his civil and military officers. Hasan died on 11th February, 1358. He was just to his co-religionists and a propagator of Islam. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Muhammad Shah I (1358-77). To this ruler belongs the credit of organising the administration of the new kingdom on a sound basis. His foreign policy was marked by hostility to the Hindu kingdoms of Vijayanagar and Warangal with whom he fought almost throughout his reign. He defeated the rulers of these States and compelled them to yield a huge war indemnity. Muhammad was fond of wine and other pleasures. He died in 1371. His son, Mujahid Shah, now became ruler. He continued his father's policy of waging war against Vijayanagar. He besieged that city, but failed to capture it, made peace and returned to Gulbarga. A conspiracy was formed against his life as the result of which the throne passed to one of his near relatives, named Daud Khan. Daud himself was murdered in May, 1378. The nobles now raised Muhammad Shah, a grandson of Hasan, to the throne who ruled from 1378 to 1397. He was a man of peace-loving disposition and a patron of scholars. He built mosques and gathered men of learning at his court. His reign was marked by a period of peace with Vijayanagar. The last days of this monarch were embittered by intrigues of his sons who aspired to the throne. He died in April, 1397. Then followed two weak rulers whose reigns lasted for a few months each. In November, 1397, Firoz, a grandson of Hasan, seized the throne and assumed the title of Taj-ud-din Firoz Shah. His reign lasted from 1397 to 1422. He was a brave ruler and was fond of the society of shaikhs and learned men. At the same time, he was addicted to sensual pleasures and was a narrow-minded Muslim. He took up the threads of the foreign policy from his predecessors and fought three wars with Vijayanagar, the first two of which were successful. In the last war he was defeated. He fled in confusion, but was pursued. The Vijayanagar troops obtained possession of the southern and eastern districts of the Bahamani kingdom. Firoz felt humiliated and neglected his administration. After this defeat he was deposed by his brother, Ahmad, in 1422.

The reign of Ahmad Shah (1422-35) is famous, for it was marked by two important events. Firstly, he transferred his capital

from Gulbarga to Bidar which had a better situation and more salubrious climate. Secondly, the rivalry between the parties at his court, namely, the Dakhin party and the foreign party, became accentuated. The Dakhin party consisted of local Muslim nobles and was supported by the Africans who did not enjoy high posts in the kingdom. The other party, known as the foreign party, consisted of the Turks, the Persians, the Arabs and held important places at the court and in the provinces. The Dakhinis were jealous of them. Moreover, religious differences added to the political rivalry. The Dakhinis were Sunnis, while the foreigners were mostly Shias. Owing to the dissension at court the administration was much weakened. Ahmad Shah, nevertheless, pursued a vigorous foreign policy. In order to avenge the losses of his brother's time, he attacked and besieged Vijayanagar. The raja was reduced to great distress and had to pay a huge indemnity. In 1424-25 Ahmad conquered Warangal and slew its ruler. The independent kingdom of Warangal, thus, came to an end. Next, Ahmad defeated Husang Shah of Malwa and inflicted great loss on him. He fought with Gujarat, too, but did not succeed. His last achievement was the victory against the chiefs of Konkan. He died in 1435.

He was succeeded by his son, Ala-ud-din II (1435-54). Ala-ud-din suppressed his brother's (Muhammad's) rebellion and appointed him governor of the Raichur Doab where he remained loyal till the end of his life. Having overcome domestic dissension, he undertook an expedition against Konkan and reduced its chiefs to submission. He compelled the raja of Sangameshwar to give his daughter in marriage to him. Nasir Khan of Khandesh, his father-in-law, took up the cause of his daughter and invaded Barar, but was defeated. Ala-ud-din engaged himself in the traditional warfare with Vijayanagar and acquired huge booty and compelled the raja to give him tribute. Ala-ud-din founded a hospital which was handsomely endowed. He died in 1457. His successor was his eldest son, Humayun, who ruled from 1457 to 1461. He was a tyrant and was known as *zalim*. He died in 1461. Then came to the throne Nizam Shah, a minor son of Humayun. The queen mother, Maqdum-i-Jahan, became the regent. Taking advantage of the minority of the ruler, the rulers of Orissa and Telingana invaded the Bahamani kingdom, but they were repelled. Then Mahmud Khalji of Malwa came on the scene. He invaded Nizam Shah's country; but owing

to the intervention of Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat, he had to retire. The boy king died in 1463, and was succeeded by his brother, named Muhammad. He assumed the title of Muhammad Shah III (1563-82). Like other rulers of his dynasty, he was fond of drink and debauchery. The administration was carried on by his famous minister, Mahmud Gawan, who was given the title of Khwaja Jahan. This prime minister served the Bahamani kingdom with devotion and loyalty. He undertook a number of successful military operations and extended the boundaries of his master's kingdom. His first work was to subdue the Hindu rajas of Konkan. He captured several forts. He compelled the raja of Sangameshwar to surrender the fortress of Khalna. He also conquered Goa which was one of the best parts of the Vijayanagar empire. One of his assistants seized the forts of Rajamundry and Kondavir. The most important military campaign was, however, against Vijayanagar. The raja was defeated and an immense booty fell into the hands of the victors. An expedition was undertaken against Orissa, from where a large booty, including some elephants, was brought to Bidar. But the Bahamani kingdom suffered from a terrible famine for want of rains, which lasted for two years. This calamity was followed by another, namely, the assassination of the prime minister, Mahmud Gawan. Muhammad Shah III, in his drunken mood, ordered the prime minister to be put to death, at the instigation of the Dakhini nobles who were jealous of his power and influence. They produced a forged letter before the Sultan and made him believe that Mahmud Gawan was in treasonable correspondence with the ruler of Vijayanagar. Mahmud Gawan was put to death on 5th April, 1481. This prime minister was a foreigner and had served the Bahamani kingdom during three successive reigns with ability and loyalty. He was a learned scholar and was fond of the society of learned men. He built a magnificent college at Bidar where he had collected a large number of extremely valuable books. His private life was simple and free from defects; but, like other high-placed nobles of his time, he was religious bigot and persecuted the Hindus and their religion. With his death "departed all the cohesion and power of the Bahamani kingdom." The administration became weak. The drunken Sultan, Muhammad III, followed his prime minister and died on 22nd March, 1482.

He was succeeded by Mahmud Shah, his younger son, who was

devoid of ability and character. The quarrel between the Dakhini and the foreign nobles continued. Rival nobles and governors cared for their own interests as against the interests of the State. They seized power and asserted their independence. The kingdom was reduced in size and Mahmud's authority remained confined to a small area around the capital. On Mahmud's death he had three successors, one after another, who, like him, were mere puppets in the hands of Qasim Barid-ul-mamalik and, after his death, in those of his son, Amir Ali Barid. The last ruler of this dynasty was Kalimullah Shah. With his death, in 1527, the Bahamani kingdom came to an end. On its ruins sprang five independent kingdoms. They were : (1) The Adilshahi kingdom of Bijapur, (2) The Nizamshahi kingdom of Ahmadnagar, (3) The Imadshahi kingdom of Barar, (4) The Qutubshahi kingdom of Golkunda, and (5) The Baridshahi kingdom of Bidar.

The Bahamani kingdom lasted for over a hundred and seventy-five years during which period the dynasty had eighteen kings. The history of the kingdom is full of intrigues, civil wars and constant struggle with its neighbours. Of the eighteen kings of the dynasty, five were murdered, three were deposed, two were blinded and two died of intemperance. We are told by a Russian traveller, named Athanasius Nikitin, who visited the Bahamani kingdom in 1417, that the country was populous, but the mass of the people were very poor. The nobles, on the other hand, were extremely rich and lived in luxury. Whenever a nobleman went out he was preceded by twenty horsemen and followed by three hundred soldiers on horseback and five hundred on foot and by a number of other people, such as, torch-bearers and musicians. But the lot of the common people was miserable.

The five kingdoms of the Dakhin

Bijapur. The most important of the States which arose on the ruins of the Bahamani kingdom was Bijapur. It was founded by Yusuf Adil Shah and is, therefore, known as the Adilshahi kingdom of Bijapur. In his early days, he was known as a Georgian slave who was purchased by Mahmud Gawan. But, according to Farishta, he was the second son of Sultan Murad II of Turkey from where he had fled to save himself from his elder brother. Be that as it may, Yusuf Adil Khan was possessed of great ability and strength of character and rose to prominence in the service of Mahmud Gawan.

When he set himself up as an independent king of Bijapur in 1489-90, he proved to be a just and vigorous ruler. Though he had some preference for the Shia sect, he granted toleration to all his subjects and employing Hindus in government service. His administration was marked by justice and humanity, and his court was thronged by scholars from Persia, Turkistan and other Central Asian countries. His four immediate successors were not as able as he, and their reigns were marked by intrigues and war. The sixth ruler, Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1579-1626), was a tolerant and wise king. According to Meadows Taylor, "He was the greatest of all the kings of the Adilshahi dynasty and, in most respects, except its founder, the most able and popular." He annexed the kingdom of Bidar to Bijapur in 1618-19. Bijapur now came into contact with the Mughul Emperor Shah Jahan in the time of his successor, Mahmud Adil Shah. It was annexed by Aurangzeb in 1686.

Golkunda. Golkunda comprised the old Hindu kingdom of Warangal. Its founder was Qutub Shah, a Turki officer of the Bahamani kingdom. During the reign of Mahmud Shah Bahamani he was the governor of Telingana. He declared his independence in 1512 or 1513. He ruled upto 1543 and was succeeded by his son, Jamshid. During the reign of its third king, Ibrahim, Golkunda came into conflict with Vijayanagar. After Ibrahim's death the administration of Golkunda fell into decay owing to the weakness of its later rulers. It was annexed by Aurangzeb in 1687.

Ahmadnagar. The kingdom of Ahmadnagar was founded by Malik Ahmad whose father, Nizam-ul-mulk Bahri, was a converted Hindu and prime minister of the Bahamani kingdom. In 1490 Malik Ahmad, who was governor of Junar, declared himself independent. He founded the city of Ahmadnagar and transferred his capital to that place. He captured Daultabad in 1499. He died in 1508 and was succeeded by his son, Burhan-i-Nizam Shah. The third ruler of the dynasty, Husain Shah, joined the Muslim confederacy against Vijayanagar in 1565. The later rulers of this kingdom were weak. The kingdom was over-run and its ruler defeated by Akbar in 1600 and compelled to become a vassal. It was finally annexed to the Mughul empire in 1636.

Bidar. After the governors of the Bahamani kingdom had become independent, a small portion of it survived It was held by the Barids. In 1526 or 1527 Amir Ali Barid removed the puppet

Bahamani Sultan and set himself up as an independent ruler of Bidar. His dynasty became known as the Baridshahi dynasty of Bidar. In 1618-19 it was annexed by Bijapur.

Barar. The founder of this kingdom was Fatch-ullah Imad Shah who asserted his independence in 1490. The kingdom became known from his title as the Imadshahi kingdom of Barar. It was conquered and annexed by Ahmadnagar in 1574.

Of the above five kingdoms, two, namely Bijapur and Golkunda, produced some good rulers. All the five states had a long quarrel with the Hindu empire of Vijayanagar. Ultimately, they combined together and defeated the ruler of Vijayanagar at Talikota in 1565. They quarrelled among themselves also and hampered peace and prosperity in the Dakhin.

The Vijayanagar Empire

Origin. The empire of Vijayanagar came into existence during the confusion of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign. There are several theories about its origin and the controversy has not as yet come to an end. It is, however, definite that the empire was founded in 1336 by Harihara and Bukka, two of the five sons of Sangama, who were originally in the service of the Hoysala king, Vir Ballala III, and were responsible for organising resistance against the encroachment of the Sultan of Delhi. The city of Anegundi, on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra, which formed the nucleus of the empire, was probably founded by Vir Ballala III about the year 1336. On the death of Vir Ballala III's son and successor, Virupaksha Ballala, in 1346, Harihara and Bukka found themselves in possession of the territory that had belonged to the Hoysala kingdom. They made Vijayanagar, on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra, their capital. The town, probably, owes its birth to Vir Ballala III; but, after it was made the seat of a new government, it must have been greatly improved by Harihara and Bukka. The founders seem to have been greatly inspired and aided by the celebrated scholar and saint, Madhava Vidyaranya and his equally famous brother, Sayana, a commentator of the holy *Vedas*.

The Sangama dynasty. The founders, Harihara and Bukka, belonged to the Sangama dynasty, so-called from their father, Sangama. Harihara I did not assume full imperial title and his brother, Bukka, who followed him, also refrained from doing so. Harihara and his brother brought under their control almost the whole of the

territory that had formerly belonged to the Hoysala kingdom. Bukka sent a mission to China in 1374. He died in 1379 and was succeeded by his son, Harihara II. The new ruler assumed the imperial titles of Maharajadhiraj and Raja Parameshwara, etc. He was a great fighter and conqueror and extended his authority over Kanara, Mysore, Trichinopoly, Kanchi and Chingleput regions. During his reign his son, Bukka II, made an attempt to capture by force the Raichur Doab, situated between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers and forming the bone of contention between the Vijayanagar empire and the Bahamani kingdom. He was defeated by Firoz Shah Bahamani. Though a worshipper of Shiva, Harihara II was tolerant towards other religions. He died in 1406 and was succeeded by his son, Deva Raya I. During his reign there were wars with the Bahamani kingdom. He died in 1422. The next king was Vijaya Bukka or Vir Vijaya who reigned for a few months. Then came Deva Raya II who reorganised the administration and placed his army on a sound footing. He appointed an officer to look after the overseas commerce. During his reign Vijayanagar was visited by two foreign travellers, Nicolo Conti, an Italian, and Abdur Razzaq, a Persian, who had left graphic descriptions of the city and the empire. The empire now included the whole of southern India and touched the shores of Ceylon. Deva Raya II died in 1446. His successors were weak. There were rebellions and foreign invasions. The Bahamani Sultan and the ruler of Orissa threatened the eastern provinces. The invaders were, however, successfully repelled by Narasinha, a powerful chieftain of Chandragiri (Chittur district). This chief deposed Virupaksha II, the last ruler of the Sangama dynasty, and seized the throne in about 1486.

The Saluva dynasty. After this episode, which is known as the First Usurpation in the history of the Vijayanagar empire, Narasinha Saluva laid the foundation of a new dynasty, known as the Saluva dynasty. Narasinha ruled for six years. He was an able and popular ruler. He fought for, and recovered, most of the districts occupied by the Bahamani Sultans and the king of Orissa. He was succeeded by his two sons, one after the other, who proved to be worthless princes. During their reigns the power was wielded by Narasa Nayaka who was the commander of the army. When Narasa died in 1505, his ambitious son, Vira Narasinha, deposed Narasinha's worthless son and set himself up as king. This is called the Second Usurpation.

The Taluva dynasty. Vira Narasinha laid the foundation of a new dynasty, which is known as the Taluva dynasty. He seems to have been a fairly successful ruler. He ruled from 1505 to 1509, and, after his death, was succeeded by his younger brother, Krishnadeva Raya (1509-30). Krishnadeva Raya was the greatest king of Vijayanagar and one of the greatest in the entire history of India. A great soldier and general, he waged many wars in all of which he was successful. First of all, he subdued his refractory vassals and reduced them to submission. Next, he obtained possession of the Raichur Doab. Then he turned his attention towards his hostile neighbours. In 1513 he defeated Gajapati Prataprudra, the king of Orissa and recovered from him those portions of the Vijayanagar territory which the latter had wrested during the reigns of his weak predecessors. In 1514 he captured the fortress of Udayagiri and made an uncle and an aunt of the raja of Orissa prisoners. Next, he acquired the fortress of Kondavidu and, thereafter, Kondapalli was acquired. In these campaigns the wife and three sons of the raja of Orissa were taken prisoners. They were treated with courtesy and consideration. After his success against Orissa, Krishnadeva Raya turned against the Sultan of Bijapur whom he defeated in March, 1520. He ravaged Bijapur territory and razed the fortress of Gulbarga to the ground. He was, thus, successful in humbling the pride of his hostile neighbours. The result of his military expeditions was that his authority now extended as far as south Konkan in the west, Vizagapattam in the east and the extremity of the Indian peninsula in the south. Some islands in the Indian Ocean, also, seem to have acknowledged his suzerainty. The power and prestige of the Vijayanagar kingdom reached its zenith under this ruler.

Krishnadeva Raya was an equally great administrator. He re-organised the administration of the empire. Himself an accomplished scholar, he was a generous patron of learning. He was also noted "for his religious zeal and catholicity". Though a follower of Vaishnavism, he respected and tolerated all other religions. He maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese governor Albuquerque and granted him permission to build a fort at Bhatkal. He died in 1529 or 1530. By the unanimous testimony of foreign and Indian writers, Krishnadeva Raya was one of the most remarkable kings that ever ruled in any part of the world. The Portuguese traveller, Domingos Paes, writes : "He is the most learned and perfect king that could

possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners and receives them kindly, asking all about their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice, but subject to certain fits of rage...He is by rank a greater lord than any, by reason of what he possesses in armies and territories; but it seems that he has, in fact, nothing, compared to what a man like him ought to have, so gallant and perfect is he in all things."

Battle of Talikota, 1565. Krishnadeva Raya was succeeded by his brother, Achyuta Raya (1530-42). But this prince was a weak ruler. During his time, rival political groups came into existence. The central authority was, therefore, weakened. On his death the throne passed to his nephew, Sadasiva; but the power was in the hands of his famous minister, Rama Raya. Rama Raya was an able administrator. But he was ambitious and tactless. He interfered in the quarrels of the Muslim Sultans of the Dakhin, thinking that this policy would lead to the restoration of the power and prestige of the Vijayanagar empire. In 1543 he entered into an alliance with Ahmadnagar and Golkunda against Bijapur. A few years later, he joined Bijapur and Golkunda against Ahmadnagar. A joint invasion of Ahmadnagar was undertaken. The Vijayanagar army ravaged the enemy territory and is said to have destroyed mosques and disrespected the *Quran*. This insult to Islam, which must have been highly exaggerated by the parties concerned, brought about an alliance among the Sultans of the Dakhin. The combined armies of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar invaded Vijayanagar and inflicted upon her a defeat on the field of Talikota on 23rd January, 1565. Rama Raya, the prime minister, fought well; but he was captured and put to death by the Sultan of Ahmadnagar with his own hands. The victors acquired a huge booty consisting of jewels, tents, arms and cash, besides horses and slaves. They now proceeded to the city of Vijayanagar and destroyed it mercilessly. In the words of Sewell, the author of *A Forgotten Empire* : "Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been brought and wrought so suddenly on so splendid a city....."

Though the battle of Talikota crippled the Vijayanagar empire, it could not blot it out of existence. After their victory there arose mutual jealousy among the four Sultans which prevented them from combining together to put an end to the Vijayanagar empire. Their

jealousy enabled Vijayanagar to recover a part of its territory and power.

The Aravidu dynasty. After the battle of Talikota, Rama Raya's brother, Tirumala, transferred the capital to Penugonda. He succeeded in restoring a part of the power and prestige of the empire. He was an ambitious man and, in 1570, he deposed king Sadasiva and seized the throne. He laid the foundation of the Aravidu dynasty. He was succeeded by his son, Ranga II, who was a successful ruler. Then came his brother, Venkata II, to the throne who ruled from 1586 to 1614. During his time the disintegration of the kingdom set in and the king committed the mistake of recognising the complete autonomy of the kingdom of Mysore which was founded by Raja Oedyar in 1612. He transferred the capital to Chandragiri. On his death, in 1614, there was a war of succession and the result was the disruption of the kingdom. The last important ruler of this dynasty was Ranga III. He was powerless to reduce the refractory vassals to submission and to resist the aggression of the Sultan of Bijapur and Golkunda. The empire came to an end after subordinate officers, like the chiefs of Sringapattam and Bednur and the nayaks of Madura and Tanjore, had declared their independence.

The administration of Vijayanagar

Central Government. The king of Vijayanagar empire was the fountainhead of all power in the State; but he was an enlightened despot. Though he was the supreme civil, military and judicial authority, he was not a tyrant or even an irresponsible despot. He governed the empire according to *dharma* and had always the interests of the kingdom and the welfare of the people at heart. The ideal of kingship of Krishnadeva Raya, who was the most important king of the dynasty, was like that of Frederick the Great of Prussia. "A crowned king," writes he, in one of his books entitled *Amuktamalyada* (in Telugu), "should always rule with an eye towards *dharma*." He goes on to say : "A king who should rule, collecting round him people skilled in statecraft, should investigate the mines yielding precious metals in his kingdom, and extract the same and levy taxes from his people moderately, should counteract the acts of his enemies by crushing them with force, should be friendly, should protect one and all of his subjects, should put an end to the mixing up of the castes among them, should always try to increase the merit of the Brahmans, should strengthen his fortress and lessen the growth of the

undesirable things and should be ever mindful of the purification of his cities....."

There was a council of ministers to assist the king in the work of administration. We do not know their exact number; but, for a big kingdom like Vijayanagar, there must have been six to eight ministers. They were appointed and dismissed by the king and held their posts at the king's pleasure. The ministers were from the Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaishya castes. Sometimes the office of a minister was hereditary; but this was not so in all cases. There was a secretariat. Besides the ministers, there were other officers holding lower ranks, such as, the chief treasurer, officer in charge of jewels, officer in charge of commerce, the prefect of the police, the master of the horse, and so on. The household department of the king, too, was well organised. The court was thronged by nobles, priests, astrologers, musicians, scholars and poets. The splendour of the court, on which the ruler spent a huge sum, was considered an object of wonder to foreign diplomats and travellers.

Provincial government. The Vijayanagar empire was divided into six provinces. Some writers, who base their conclusion on the statement of Domingos Paes, wrongly hold that there were two hundred provinces in the empire. The mistake is, probably, due to Paes's confounding the tributary vassals with the provincial governors. Each province was under a governor called *naik* who was either a member of the royal family or an influential noble. The governor exercised civil, military and judicial powers within his province. He had, however, to furnish an account of the income and expenditure of his province to the central government. He was also required to send military assistance in time of need. The governors, though controlled by the king if he happened to be a man of strong personality, enjoyed wide powers within their jurisdictions.

Local administration. The provinces were divided into districts which were further sub-divided into smaller units. The lowest unit of administration was the village which was self-sufficient. There was a village assembly, like the *panchayat* of northern India, in every village. It carried on the administration of the village through its hereditary officers, such as the village accountant, the village weightsman, the village watchman and the village officer in charge of forced labour. These officers were paid by grants of land or by a portion of agricultural produce. The central administration

maintained contact with the village through an officer, called *Mahanayakacharya*, who had a kind of supervisory authority over the administration of the village.

Finance. The mainstay of the government was the land revenue. There was a separate land revenue department. For the purpose of assessment, the land was classified as wet land, dry land and orchards and woods. The State demand during Hindu times was generally one-sixth of the produce; but the kings of Vijayanagar seem to have charged a little more than one-sixth, as they had to maintain a huge army to protect the kingdom from the perpetual hostility of the Bahmani Sultans. Besides the land tax, the government levied the grazing tax, the marriage tax, the customs duty and a tax on gardening and manufactures of various articles. The taxation was rather high; but there was no extortion. The taxes were realised both in cash and in kind.

Army. The empire maintained a huge army, the strength of which varied from time to time. Under Krishnadeva Raya the State army consisted of 3,600 horse, seven lakh foot and 651 elephants. There was an artillery department; but the artillery must have been rather crude. The military establishment was under the management of the commander-in-chief who was assisted by a number of subordinate officials. But the organisation and discipline of the Vijayanagar army seems to have been inferior to those of the Muslim Sultans of the Dakhin.

Justice. The king was the fountainhead of justice and decided cases. There were also regular courts. The judges were appointed by the king. The village people had their cases decided by their own village assembly or *panchayat*. In some cases disputes were settled by the judges with the help of the local bodies. The law administered in the court was that which had come down from the past and was based on traditional regulations and customs and constitutional usage of the country. Criminal law was severe. Theft, adultery and treason to the State were punished with death or mutilation. For ordinary offences the punishment was fine or confiscation of property or ordeal.

Religious toleration. The Vijayanagar kings were deeply religious people. They were devoted to Vaishnavism. But they tolerated all religions, whether of Indian origin or absolutely foreign. Edoardo Barbosa writes : "The king allows such freedom that every

man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance and without enquiry whether he is a Christian, a Jew, a Moor or a Hindu."

Defects of Vijayanagar administration. On the whole the administration was elaborately organised and just. It suffered, however, from a few defects, the most glaring of which was the great power enjoyed by the provincial governors which, subsequently, proved to be the cause of the disruption of the empire. Secondly, the army organisation was not as efficient as it should have been specially as Vijayanagar had to fight almost a continuous war against the Bahamani Sultans. Thirdly, the rulers committed the mistake of allowing the Portuguese to settle on their western coast for the sake of commercial profit. Fourthly, the individualistic tendency of the people was not curbed. Finally, the rulers "failed to develop a sustained commercial activity inspite of various facilities."

The social life. We get a clear picture of the life of the people from the writings of foreign travellers. Society seems to have been well organised. Women occupied a high position and took an active part in political, social and literary life of the empire. They were trained in wrestling, in the use of various weapons of offence and defence, in music and in fine arts. Some of them received literary education of a high order. This presupposes some kind of general female education. Nuniz writes that the king had women wrestlers, astrologers and soothsayers, besides women accountants, women clerks and women guards. Of course, in music and dancing and other fine arts they excelled men. There were some women judges, too. Polygamy was recognised and was practised by the wealthy people. Child marriage was common. Among the rich people dowry was practised on a large scale. Widows committed *sati* on funeral pyres of their husbands. The Brahmans exercised great influence in the society. They were important not only in social and religious matters, but also in administrative and political affairs. Except for the Brahmans, there was no restriction in matters of diet. The kings and the general public were meat-eaters and they ate all kinds of animal food except the flesh of oxen or cows. Animal sacrifices were common. Buffaloes and sheep were sacrificed on the occasion of important festivals.

Art and literature. The empire of Vijayanagar had high cultural and artistic achievements to its credit. We have already

seen that Krishnadeva Raya was a profound scholar and a generous patron of literature. Other kings, too, were fond of learning and were surrounded by great scholars and poets. They encouraged Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil and Kannada languages and literatures. Such notable scholars as Sayana, the well-known commentator of the *Vedas*, and his brother, Madhava Vidyaranya, flourished in the early days of the Vijayanagar rule. Under Krishnadeva Raya literary activity reached its zenith. There were great poets, philosophers and religious teachers at his court. They were generously rewarded by grants of money and land. The king himself was a scholar and author of note. The tradition passed on and was continued by his successors. The example of the kings was followed by the members of the ruling family and by the nobles and other well-to-do people. Many works on music, dancing, drama, grammar, logic, philosophy and other branches of knowledge were produced. Art and architecture were not neglected. Temples of remarkable beauty were constructed by the kings. Krishnadeva Raya built the famous Hazara temple which, in the opinion of an art critic, is "one of the most perfect specimens of Hindu temple architecture in existence." The Vitthalaswami temple is another example of the excellent architecture produced by the Vijayanagar kings. Painting was also patronised. Music, too, was greatly encouraged. Theatre was not forgotten. In short, the history of the Vijayanagar empire was marked by an outburst of great literary and artistic activity. In the opinion of a scholar the empire brought about a 'synthesis of south Indian culture'.

The economic condition. The empire of Vijayanagar was one of the richest states then known to the world. Several foreign travellers, who visited our country during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, have left glowing accounts of its splendour and wealth. The Italian traveller, Nicolo Conti, who visited Vijayanagar in 1420, writes : "The circumference of the city is sixty miles; its walls are carried upto the mountains and enclose the valley at their foot, so that its extent is thereby increased. In this city there are estimated to be ninety thousand men fit to bear arms....the king is more powerful than all the other kings of India." The Persian diplomat and traveller, Abdur Razzaq, who visited Vijayanagar in 1442-43 remarks : "The country is so well populated that it is impossible, in a reasonable space, to convey an idea of it. In the king's treasure there are

chambers with excavations in them, filled with molten gold forming one mass. All the inhabitants of the country, whether high or low, even down to the artificers of the bazaar, wear jewels and gilt ornaments in their ears and around their necks, arms, wrists and fingers." Portuguese traveller, Domingos Paes, writes: "Its king has much treasure and many soldiers and many elephants.....In this city you will find men belonging to every nation and people, because of the great trade which it has and the many precious stones there, principally diamonds.....This is the best provided city in the world and is stocked with provisions, such as rice, wheat, grains, Indian corn and a certain amount of barley and beans, *moongs*, pulses, horse grain and many other seeds which grow in this country on the food of the people and there is a large store of these, and very cheap.....The streets and markets are full of laden oxen without count..." Barbosa, who came to India in 1516, is equally full of praise and says that the city is "of great extent, highly populous and the seat of an active commerce in country diamonds, rubies from Pegu, silk of China and Alexandria, and cinnabar, camphor, musk, pepper and sandal from Malabar."

From the unanimous testimony of foreign writers it is evident that the empire of Vijayanagar was very rich and prosperous. It was the policy of its rulers to encourage agriculture in the different parts of the empire and to increase agricultural production by a wise irrigation policy. Its agricultural wealth was supplemented by numerous industries, the most important of which were textile, mining and metallurgy. Another important industry was perfumery. Industries and trades were regulated by guilds. It was the common practice of people of the same trade to live in one and the same quarter of the city. There was a great deal of commerce, both inland and overseas. The empire possessed numerous ports and had commercial relations with the islands in the Indian Ocean, the Malay Archipelago, Burma, China, Arabia, Persia, South Africa, Abyssinia and Portugal. The chief articles exported were cloth, rice, iron, saltpetre, sugar and spices. The articles imported into the country were horses, elephants, pearls, copper, coal, mercury, China silks and velvets. For maritime commerce there were ships. Vijayanagar had a small navy of its own and people were acquainted with the art of shipbuilding. For internal transport bullocks, horses, carts and asses were made use of.

The Vijayanagar empire had gold and copper coins. There were some silver coins also. The upper and middle classes of the people were wealthy and were accustomed to a high standard of living. The common people were not devoid of the necessities of life, but they were poor as compared with the upper classes. One chief defect in the economic system of the empire was that the common people had to bear the brunt of taxation. Otherwise, however, they were quite happy. They were much more prosperous than the people in the Bahamani kingdom.

In short, the empire "served a high historical purpose by acting as a champion of Hindu religion and culture against the aggressions of the Muslims in southern India."

14

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SULTANATE

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The Sultanate : a theocracy

The Sultanate of Delhi was a theocracy and not a secular state. Throughout the period the State had its own religion, which was Islam. It did not recognise any other religion, such as Hinduism, the followers of which constituted an overwhelmingly vast majority of the Sultanate's population. The ruling family and dominant ruling class were the followers of this religion and, in strict theory, all the resources of the State were meant for the protection and propagation of the Muslim religion. A modern writer (Dr. I. H. Qureshi) maintains that the Sultanate of Delhi was theocentric and not a theocracy on the ground that "the rule of the ordained priesthood," which is the essential feature of a theocracy, was absent in the Sultanate. This agreement ignores both the letter and the spirit of the Islamic polity. There is no denying the fact—and Dr. Qureshi admits it—that in every Muslim State the canon law is the supreme law; civil law is subordinate to it, and, in fact, it merges its existence in the latter. The Muslim *ulema*, though not ordained and hereditary, were as fanatical and biased as, if not more than, any ordained clergy and insisted on the enforcement of the Quranic law and extirpation of idolatry and heresy. The conduct of the ruling authority in the Sultanate of Delhi was governed by the Quranic injunctions. The Sultan was not only expected to follow this law in his own personal life,[1] but also in the administration. In fact, he was to administer this law, and if, in the opinion of his subjects, he failed to follow it in administering the country, he ceased to be their lawful king. The ideal of the Islamic State in India, therefore, was to convert the entire country to Muslim religion and to destroy the indigenous religions root and branch by turning *dar-ul-harb*

[1] If they could not follow it and drank wine and indulged in other forbidden pursuits it was due to human frailty and not to want of zeal for religion.

(infidel lands) into *dar-ul-Islam* (Muslim lands), and compelling the people therein to embrace the faith of Muhammad.

The Caliph as the nominal sovereign

According to the Islamic theory of sovereignty, there is only one Muslim king of all Muslims wherever they might be living. He is the Caliph or the *Khalifa*. During the heyday of the Caliph's power he used to appoint governors to the various provinces of the Caliphate. Even when a governor set himself up as an independent ruler or a Muslim adventurer conquered any land and became its king, he invariably envoked the sanction of the Khalifa's name, called himself his vassal and received investiture of his office from him, though, in actual practice, he exercised the authority of an independent king. This fiction of the unity of the Khilafat was kept alive even when the Caliphate came to an end and the last Abbasid Khalifa, Mustasim, was put to death by the Mongol leader, Hulagu Khan, in 1558. In conformity with the practice of the age, the Sultans of Delhi styled themselves as the Caliph's deputy or assistant, received investiture from him and had his name inscribed on the coins and read in the *khutba*. The first Sultan of Delhi to make a departure from this practice was Ala-ud-din Khalji. His son, Qutub-ud-din Mubarak, did not believe in the fiction of the Caliphate and actually assumed the title of Khalifa for himself. Barring these two examples, almost all the Sultans of Delhi during our period recognised the nominal sovereignty of the Khalifa. Modern Muslim writers have stretched the point too far in their desire to show that the so-called unity of the so-called Islamic World was a potent reality. The fact, however, is that no Sultan of Delhi ever considered the Khalifa to be his real sovereign. He did not derive power from the nominal Khalifa and was himself the real sovereign of the realm. Nevertheless, as the rulers of this period were foreigners and Muslims, they thought it advantageous to maintain formal relation with the Islamic World outside.

The Sultan

The head of the Sultanate of Delhi was called the Sultan. Sovereignty was supposed to reside in the entire Sunni population of the country, called the *millat*. The Sultan was to be elected by this brotherhood. In actual practice, it was difficult, if not impossible, to get together all the Sunni Musalmans in the country to exercise

their right, and, therefore, the franchise was restricted and became confined to a few notable men and, eventually, to only one man. The right of nomination by the dying king was also recognised. Thus both the methods were resorted to in choosing the Sultan of Delhi. There was no hereditary principle of succession and the office of the Sultan was open, at least in theory, to any *bonafide* Muslim. But, in practice, it was restricted to the immigrant Turks, and then to a still smaller oligarchy and, in the end, to members of the ruling family. In the 15th and 16th centuries, however, the scope was extended and there were rulers of the Arab and Afghan descent.

In strict Islamic theory the true king of a Muslim State is God. The Sultan is His agent and exists to enforce the so-called divine law as expressed in the *Quran*. The Sultan was, thus, the chief executive of the Sultanate of Delhi. He was not only to enforce the law, but he was also its interpreter. In this work he was guided by the *Hadis*, the decisions of the well known jurists and the consensus of opinion of the learned divines, whenever there was a controversy about the interpretation of a particular rule. The Sultan was, also, the highest judicial authority. In fact, he was the fountainhead of justice in the country. Besides, he was the commander of the army. His powers were very wide, indeed. He was a perfect autocrat and his authority was unfettered. The basis of his power was religious and military. As long as he followed the Quranic law, his authority was supreme. There were, however, certain Sultans of Delhi, notably Ala-ud-din Khalji and, for some time, Muhammad bin Tughluq, who defied the Quranic law and yet no one dared to remove them, because they had the support of a powerful army. Thus, even when the Sultan went against the Quranic injunctions, he could not be deposed as long as he was the master of a powerful military establishment. There was no constitutional device to remove an erring king peacefully from the throne. The only way to do it was by a successful rebellion which meant a civil war.

The immensity of the power of the Sultan during our period is clear from the fact that he was not only king of all the people in his dominions, but he was also the religious head of the Muslim section of the population. Thus he was "Caesar and Pope combined in one."

The Sultan was a thorough-going military despot. All power in the State was concentrated in his hands. Inspite of the original

democratic nature of an Islamic State, the government of the Sultan of Delhi had to be a centralized organisation owing to the circumstances. The Sultan had to live and function in the midst of a hostile Hindu population. There were powerful Hindu chiefs who were, naturally, anxious to resist the expansion of the foreign government and even to make a bid for the recovery of their independence. There was danger from outside, too, and the north-western frontier of the Sultanate was almost continuously battered by the Mongol inroads. Under these circumstances, the Sultan had to maintain a large force for defence and to centralize the administration.

The Ministers

There were ministers to assist the Sultan in the work of administration, whose number varied from time to time. During the so-called Slave period, there were four ministers, namely, the *wazir*, the *ariz-i-mamalik*, the *diwan-i-insha* and the *diwan-i-rasalat*. There was, sometimes, the *naib* or *naib-i-mamalik* also whose office was next only to the Sultan and, therefore, superior to that of the *wazir*. The *naib* wielded great authority when the Sultan happened to be weak; but he was only a nominal deputy Sultan in normal times and much inferior to the *wazir*. Subsequently, the *sadr-us-sudur* and *diwan-i-qaza* were raised to the status of ministers. Thus, there were six ministers at Delhi in the heyday of the Sultanate's administration. There was a seventh office which, though not technically a ministership, yet its occupant wielded greater power than most of the ministers. It was that of the comptroller of the royal household.

The Wazir

The prime minister was called the *wazir*. He stood "midway between the sovereign and his subjects." He enjoyed great authority and exercised the powers and prerogatives of the Sultan with some restrictions. He appointed important officers in the name of the Sultan and heard complaints against all officials. He acted for the king when the latter was ill or absent and also when the Sultan was a minor. His next important duty was to keep the Sultan informed of the sentiments and needs of the people and to act as his adviser in the affairs of the government. Besides being in charge of the general administration, he was, particularly, the head of the finance department. In this capacity he was responsible for laying down rules and regulations of revenue settlement and fixing the rates of other taxes

and for controlling the expenditure of the realm. In addition, he had to superintend the civil servants. He controlled the military establishment also, as all the requirements of the military department had to be referred to him. His subordinates kept accounts and disbursed salaries of the military officers and troops. The *wazir* was also in charge of stipends and subsistence allowance to learned men and the poor people. Thus, every branch of public administration came within the *wazir's* purview and every man, from the governor to the menial servant, had directly or indirectly to deal with him. In view of these wide powers, he enjoyed a great prestige and was paid handsomely by assignment of the revenues of a large estate.

The office of the wazir was called *diwan-i-wazarat*. He had an assistant, called *naib-wazir*, who was in charge of this office. Next to the *naib-wazir* was the *mushrif-i-mamalik* (accountant general). Then came the *mustaufi-i-mamalik* or auditor general. The accountant general used to enter the accounts received from the provinces and the various departments, while the auditor general used to audit them. During the reign of Firoz Tughluq, however, a change was introduced. The accountant general dealt with income, while the auditor general with the expenditure. There was a *nazir* to assist the accountant general. The auditor general, too, had assistants. Both had big offices with numerous clerks.

Diwan-i-ariz

The next important minister at the capital was *diwan-i-ariz* or *diwan-i-arz*. He may be called the army minister or the controller general of the military establishment. His main work was to recruit troops and to maintain the descriptive rolls of men and horses and to hold military review in order to inspect the forces. As the Sultan was the commander-in-chief of the army, the *ariz-i-mamalik* was, generally speaking, not required to command the royal troops; but, sometimes, he commanded a part of the army. He particularly looked after their discipline and equipment and their disposition on the field of battle. This department was so important that sometimes the Sultan personally performed some of the duties relating to it. Ala-ud-din Khalji, for instance, was greatly interested in the organisation and upkeep of his military establishment and, hence, paid personal attention to it.

Diwan-i-insha

The *diwan-i-insha* was the third minister. This minister was

in charge of royal correspondence. He was assisted by a number of *dabirs*, that is, able writers who had established their reputation as masters of style. All correspondence, much of which was of a confidential nature, between the Sultan and the rulers of other States and important vassals and officials of the kingdom passed through this department. Important royal orders were drafted in this department and then forwarded for the Sultan's sanction, after which they were copied, registered and despatched. Owing to the confidential nature of the work in his charge, the head of this department was a very trusted official.

Diwan-i-rasalat

The next minister was *diwan-i-rasalat* or *diwan-i-risalat*. There is a difference of opinion regarding the functions of this minister. According to Dr. I. H. Qureshi, he dealt with religious matters and was, also, in charge of grant of stipends to scholars and pious men. Dr. A. B. M. Habibullah, on the other hand, maintains that he was a minister for foreign affairs and was, therefore, in charge of diplomatic correspondence and the ambassadors and envoys sent to and received from foreign rulers. Dr. Habibullah's view seems to be correct, for, apart from the error of interpretation committed by Dr. Qureshi, the theory would have made duplication inevitable, as there was, from the very beginning, an officer in charge of religious affairs, endowments and charity. He was called *sadar-us-sudur*. The *diwan-i-rasalat* was a very important officer, as the Sultans were anxious to maintain diplomatic relations with Central Asian powers besides those in the country.

Sadr-us-sudur

The other two ministers were the *sadr-us-sudur* and the *diwan-i-qaza*. Very often only one minister was appointed to carry on the work of these two departments, that is, the department of religious endowment and charity and the department of justice. The chief *sadr* (*sadr-us-sudur*) was required to enforce Islamic rules and regulations and to see that the Muslims observed them in their daily life and that they said their five daily prayers regularly, kept the fast of Ramzan and so on. He had, also, to disburse a large amount of money in charity and to reward learned Muslim divines and grant subsistence allowance to scholars and men of piety. The chief *qazi*

was the head of the judicial department and had to supervise the administration of justice in the kingdom.

The Majlis-i-khalwat

The ministers were not all of the same rank and status. The *wazir* enjoyed a definitely higher status and privileges. The five other ministers were ministers by courtesy and were, more or less, like secretaries to the Sultan. There was no council of ministers as they were not called to advise the king at one and the same time. As they were appointed and dismissed by the king at will, the advice of any one of them or all of them combined was not binding on the Sultan. Moreover, the king had a large circle of advisers, many of whom were non-officials and they constituted what is known as the *majlis-i-khalwat*. It consisted of the Sultan's personal friends, his trusted officers and some of the notable *ulema*. They were called to give advice to the Sultan from time to time. Their advice, like that of the ministers, was not binding on him. Nevertheless, sometimes they exerted some influence on the administration.

Other departments

Besides the four first-rate ministers and two second-rate ministers (chief *sadr* and the chief *qazi*) there were some other departmental heads at the capital who were entrusted with important duties. They were *barid-i-mamalik* (head of the intelligence and posts department), *diwan-i-amir kohi* or the department of agriculture which was created by Muhammad bin Tughluq, the *diwan-i-mustakhraj* or the department which had to look after and realise arrears from farmers or collectors, and which was established by Ala-ud-din Khalji, *diwan-i-khairat* or the department of charity, instituted by Firoz Tughluq and *diwan-i-istihqak* or the department of pensions.

Controller of royal household

The head of the royal household, though technically in charge of private affairs of the Sultan, wielded considerable influence on the administration. The royal bodyguard and slaves, who were commanded by officers, known as *sar-i-jandar* and *diwan-i-bandagan*, functioned under his supervision. These took part in battles. There were many *karkhanas* or workshops which manufactured articles required by the army and other departments of the State. The royal stables had horses and other animals which were used for transport and war. All these were under the controller of the royal

household. Moreover, he was directly in touch with the Sultan, sometimes even more than the *wazir*. Hence he wielded great authority and enjoyed high prestige.

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

At no stage in its history was the Sultanate of Delhi divided into homogeneous provinces with uniform administrative system in them. No Sultan of Delhi ever thought of rearranging the distribution of provinces on a uniform basis. During the thirteenth century the Sultanate consisted of military commands which were known as *iqtas*. Each *iqta* was under a *muqti* or a powerful military officer. The number of *iqtas* during the time of so-called Slave kings has been given in the chapter on their administration (12). Ala-ud-din Khalji who conquered practically the whole of the country, including the Dakhin, and who was, otherwise, an original and constructive statesman, allowed big and small provinces to remain as he had found them. Under him, therefore, two kinds of provinces came into existence, namely, the *iqtas* which he had inherited from his predecessors and the new principalities that he conquered. While he retained the old *iqtas*, he appointed military governors to the newly conquered provinces which were, naturally, larger in area and income, as they had been big and flourishing Hindu states before their conquest. Add to them the principalities of the Hindu vassals who, too, were reduced to the position of governors and we have, thus, three kinds of provinces in the Sultanate from the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji. The officer-in-charge of an *iqta* continued to be known as *muqti* as before. Those appointed in charge of the new military provinces were called *walis* and sometimes *amirs*. Obviously, a *walis* enjoyed a higher status and greater authority than a *muqti*. The number of the major provinces varied from time to time. The most important military governorship during the time of the Khaljis and the Tughluqs were Bangal, Gujarat, Jaunpur, Malwa, Khandesh and the Dakhin. Both the *muqtis* and the *walis* were required to keep powerful military establishments in their jurisdictions and to maintain law and order and punish refractory zamindars. They were empowered to appoint subordinate officers and were generally responsible for the entire administration of the areas in their charge. Their power was practically unlimited as long as they obeyed the Sultan and furnished him with military aid in times of need.

They were also required to furnish an account of their income and expenditure and to pay the residue to the central government. The *walis* and the *muqtis* were advised to protect and enforce the Muslim law, to protect the *ulema*, to arrange for the administration of justice, to enforce the decisions of the court, to keep the highways free from robbers and to encourage trade and commerce and material prosperity. Firoz Tughluq advised his son, Fateh Khan, while sending him as governor of Sindh, to protect the peasants from undue exactions and tyranny, to help the learned and the holy, and to protect the people. Inspite of these pious injunctions, the governors, in normal times, enjoyed wide powers and were like petty despots in their respective areas. During the time of weak kings they behaved like *de facto* rulers and exercised unlimited authority. They engaged even in civil wars without the permission of the monarch. It was easy for some of these governors to set themselves up as independent kings during the weak days of Firoz Tughluq's successors.

In each province there was a staff for the collection of revenue. It consisted of *nazirs* and *waqufs*. There was, besides, a higher officer, called *sahib-i-diwan* or *khwaja*. He was probably appointed by the Sultan on the recommendation of the *wazir* and was in charge of keeping accounts and furnishing detailed statements of the same to the central government. According to Dr. Qureshi he was responsible to the Sultan. There were a *qazi* and some other subordinate officers in every province.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

During the thirteenth century there was no lower unit of administration than the *iqta*. But with the growth of the Sultanate and the effective suppression of the Hindu chieftains, it was found necessary in the fourteenth century to sub-divide the provinces into *shiqs*. Perhaps this was not done in every province. We know that Muhammad bin Tughluq divided the viceroyalty of the Dakhin into four *shiqs* and that the Doab was divided into *shiqs*. At the head of a *shiq* there was a *shiqdar*. He was, probably, a military officer and his duty was to maintain law and order in his jurisdiction. A little later, a smaller unit of administration than the *shiq* came into existence. It was an aggregate of a number of villages and was called *pargana*. Ibn Buttuta refers to a 'sadi' or a collection of a

hundred villages as an administrative unit. We do not know definitely about the designation and the duties of the officers of the *parganas*. There were a *chaudhari* and a collector of revenue in each *pargana*. The lowest unit was the village which had its own indigenous administration. There was in every village a *panchayat* to settle disputes. The people of the village constituted a small commonwealth and looked after their affairs and arranged for defence, watch and ward, elementary education and sanitation. Normally, they were not interfered with by the Sultan. Every village had then, as now, a *chaukidar* and a revenue officer, called *patwari*.

THE ARMY

As the Sultanate of Delhi was based primarily on force and not on the willing consent of the people, it had to maintain a much larger army than was necessary for the needs of an indigenous national State. During most of the period the army consisted of four classes : (1) regular soldiers permanently employed in the Sultan's service, (2) troops permanently employed in the service of the provincial governors and nobles, (3) recruits particularly employed in times of war and (4) Muslim volunteers enlisted for fighting what was called *jihad* or holy war.

The Sultan's troops at Delhi were called *hashm-i-qalb*. They consisted of two categories of troops, namely, those belonging to the Sultan and those that were in the service of the nobles at Delhi, such as, ministers of the court and other high officials. The troops in royal service were known as *khasah khail* and comprised royal slaves, guards called *jandars* and *afwaj-i-qalb* or the troops directly under royal command. Though these troops were in the permanent employment of the Sultan, they could not be said to have constituted a standing army. Their number was small, and it was not possible for the Sultan to depend upon them entirely in times of danger or war. For the first time in the history of the Sultanate, Ala-ud-din Khalji laid the foundation of a standing army which was directly recruited, paid and officered by the central government. It numbered 4,75,000 horse, besides a vast number of footmen. The institution continued till the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Firoz Tughluq converted the army into a feudal organisation. The Lodi army was organised on clannish basis and consisted of tribal hordes of the

Lodis, the Qarmalis, the Lohanis, the Surs, and other Afghan tribes. It was ill-organised and weak.

The contingents of the troops maintained by the nobles and provincial governors were placed at the disposal of *diwan-i-ariz* in times of war. Their organisation, discipline and payment was a matter for the individual governor. There were no uniform rules for their recruitment, training and promotion. The recruits specially employed in the time of war were irregular troops. There was no fixed rule for their payment. Muslim volunteers were encouraged to join the Sultan's army whenever it had to fight with a Hindu ruler. The *maulvis* and the *ulema* were sent round the country to exhort the Muslim population to participate in a holy war against a Hindu chief. The volunteers were not paid from the royal treasury; they were allowed a share of the booty.

The army was not a national army, as it consisted of soldiers of diverse nationalities, such as, the Turks of various tribes, the Tajiks, the Persians, the Mongols, the Afghans, the Arabs, the Abyssinians, the Indian Musalmans and the Hindus. It was a mercenary body which worked for money and whose only bond was the person of the Sultan. Being a heterogeneous body, it was not inspired by national sentiment. But, as most of its members and all its officers were Muslims, it was animated by a feeling of religious solidarity and fanaticism. Inspite of the exaggerated praise lavished on it by Dr. I. H. Qureshi, the army of the Sultans was not a homogeneous, scientifically trained and efficient force like that of Charles VIII of France or of Frederick William I of Prussia.

The army consisted of cavalry, infantry and elephants. The cavalry was the most valued arm and formed the backbone of the military establishment. Each horseman was armed with two swords, a dagger, and a bow and arrows. Sometimes he carried a mace also. The troopers wore coats of mail and the horses were caprisoned with steel. As the value of a trooper depended upon his horse, many a cavalryman had an additional horse. In fact, the cavalry was divided into three grades, namely, (1) the *murattab*, that is, the trooper who had two horses, (2) the *sawar*, that is, the cavalryman with one horse, and (3) the *do-aspa*, that is, a soldier who had a led horse and was not a cavalryman properly so-called. Great care had, of necessity, to be bestowed on the supply of good horses which were imported from Arabia, Turkistan and, sometimes, even from Russia.

The Sultan's stables had many thousands of extra horses ready for service.

The next section of the army was the infantry. The foot-soldiers were called *payaks*. Most of them were the Indian Musalmans, the Hindus and the slaves. They were armed with swords, spears and bows and arrows. The archers were called *dhanuks*, a corruption of the Sanskrit word *dhanush*.

Then there were the elephants which were highly valued by the Sultans. It is said that Balban considered a single elephant as effective in a battle as five hundred horsemen. Muhammad bin Tughluq had 3,000 elephants. Firoz had almost an equal number. The possession of elephants was considered a royal prerogative. Sometimes permission was given to a great noble to keep an elephant which was a rare mark of honour. An elephant carried several armed soldiers who were seated inside a fort-like wooden structure, called *hauda*, placed upon the elephant's back. The elephants were clad in plates of steel and armed with scythes attached to their trunks and tusks. They were trained to fight. There was an officer in charge of elephants, known as *shahna-i-fil*.

There was nothing like modern artillery, but incendiary arrows, javelins and pots full of combustibles were used in battle. Hand grenades, fireworks, rockets and naptha balls were also common. There was a machine for discharging balls by the force of gun powder. Besides, there were *manjaniqs* or *mangonels* and *mangons* (a sort of mechanical artillery) through which fire balls, fire arrows and pieces of stones and rock and even iron balls were thrown. Sometimes poisonous snakes and scorpions were hurled against the enemy. The Sultan maintained a considerable number of boats for the transport of the troops and for use in river battles.

The Sultan was the commander-in-chief of his force. He paid personal attention to its organisation and upkeep. There was, however, an army minister, known as *diwan-i-ariz*, who was in charge of recruitment of troops, their organisation and discipline and promotion. The army seemed to have been organised on decimal basis. A unit of cavalry was formed by ten troopers at whose head there was a *sar-i-khail*. The next rank was that of *sipahsalar* who had ten *sar-i-khails* under him. The third higher rank was that of *amir* who had ten *sipahsalars* under him. The next higher authority was *malik* with ten *amirs* under him, and at the head of ten *maliks* there was a

khan. Probably, this arrangement existed only on paper and was never strictly adhered to during the reign of any of the Sultans of our period. By the time of Balban, most of the offices in the army had become hereditary. Many of the soldiers sent proxies in a battle or at a military review. Ala-ud-din Khalji took steps to do away with corruption by introducing the system of branding (*dagh*) horses so as to prevent a horse from being brought twice at a review or from being substituted by a worthless pony. He also ordered the descriptive roll (*huliya*) of each soldier to be taken and recorded in registers, so that no soldier or officer in his army could send a proxy. These reforms restored discipline in the army. But, in the time of Firoz Tughluq, they were disregarded and soldiers were allowed to send substitutes to the musters. The army continued to be disorganised and ill-disciplined till the time of Sikandar Lodi who insisted on the registration of *huliya* or *chehra* and the branding of the horses.

The central government could be strict about the organisation and discipline of the army at the capital, but, so far as the contingents of the provincial governors were concerned, the centre had little control over them. They were brought to muster once a year, and it was only at that time that the *diwan-i-ariz* could enforce the regulations devised by him.

A part of the army used to be stationed at strategic places in the provinces. Forts on the frontier were garrisoned with seasoned troops. It was the duty of the commandants of the forts to see that there were adequate provisions including fodder for the animals in the forts in their charge.

The Sultans were adept in military strategy. The art of ambushing and surprise attacks were commonly resorted to. Before the army engaged in war, the general or officer-commanding almost invariably surveyed the prospective theatre of war and took geography into account in fixing a battle-field. There was the traditional practice of dividing the army into several divisions on a field of battle. There were, for example, the advance guard, the centre, the right wing, the left wing and the rear guard or reserve. Elephants were stationed in the front. They were preceded by armed infantry. According to Qureshi, there were flanking parties on either flank of an army, which seems to me to be doubtful. There was no flanking party in Ibrahim Lodi's army in the battle of Panipat. Their presence in Babur's army was a main reason of Ibrahim's defeat. Scouts

and sepoys were attached to the army. The duty of the scouts was to reconnoitre and to bring news. They rendered useful service.

The military officers were paid by assignment of land revenue, while the individual troops seem to have been paid in cash. The soldiers' pay varied from time to time. In Ala-ud-din's reign the salary of a well-equipped trooper was 234 *tankas* per annum. Muhammad Tughluq paid him 500 *tankas*. Soldiers were given food, dress and fodder free during the time of a campaign. The salary of the officers, too, varied from time to time. A *khan* was paid one lakh of *tankas* a year, and a *malik* fifty to sixty thousand *tankas* annually. Smaller officers received from one to ten thousand *tankas* a year. These included the pay of the troops under their command. The irregular troops, called *ghair-wajhis*, who were employed for short periods, were, sometimes, paid by an order on some local treasury and sometimes in cash from the central treasury. Firoz Tughluq revived payment by assignment for the soldiers also. The emoluments of the fighting forces were, on the whole, not only adequate, but also handsome.

FINANCE

The fiscal policy of the Sultanate period was based on the theory of finance of the Hanafi school of Sunni jurists. The early Turkish rulers of India had borrowed the system from their Ghaznavide predecessors. The principal sources of revenue as sanctioned by the *shariat* and realised by the Sultans were : (1) *ushr*, (2) *kharaj*, (3) *khams*, (4) *zakat*, and (5) *jizya*. Besides these there were a number of other taxes, such as income from mines and treasure trove, heirless property and customs and excise duties. The *ushr* was a land tax, charged on land held by Muslims and watered by natural means. It was one-tenth of the produce. *Kharaj* was the tax on land held by non-Muslims. According to Islamic law its rate was to be from one-tenth to one-half. *Khams* was one-fifth of the booty captured in wars against the infidels. Four-fifths of it went to the army. The *zakat* was a religious tax levied upon Muslims only. It was charged on the property if its value exceeded a certain fixed amount. The value of the property which was exempted from this tax was called *nisab*. Its rate was one-fortieth or 2½ per cent of the property. The proceeds of this tax were spent on specified items for the benefit of Muslims only, such as, repair of mosques and tombs, expenditure on

religious endowments and paying stipends and subsistence allowances to men of piety and poverty.

What is Jizya. *Jizya* or poll tax was charged from non-Muslims only. There is a difference of opinion among scholars about the nature of this tax. Some maintain that it was a religious tax levied on the non-Muslims "in return for which they received protection of life and property and exemption from military service, as non-Muslims were not entitled, according to orthodox jurists, to live in a Muslim country." Some of the modern Muslim scholars, however, hold that it was a secular tax charged from non-Muslims, as they were exempt from military service, which every Musalman, at least in theory, was liable to render to the State. Early Muslim jurists divided taxes into two groups—religious taxes and secular taxes—and they included *jizya* in the latter category. The religious tax was the *zakat* or the *sadqah*, which was charged from Muslims only. As *jizya* was not charged from the Muslims and as there was no fixed rule that its proceeds should be spent for religious purposes only, it was included by Muslim jurists among the secular taxes. The view that *jizya* is a secular tax on the basis of the above classification is evidently untenable. Whatever might have been the original intention with which this tax was levied in Islamic lands outside India, there is no doubt that, by the time the Arabs conquered Sindh, *jizya* had acquired a religious significance. It was imposed on the non-Muslims as the State gave them "protection of life and property and exemption from military service," and the Sultans considered it to be a religious duty to realise this tax rigorously. Those of our modern writers who hold this tax to be secular conveniently forget the first part of the injunction, namely, the protection of life and property of the *zimmis*, and emphasize only the latter part, namely, exemption from military service. It is clear from the history of the Mughul period that the vassal Hindu rajas who furnished military assistance to the Mughul emperors in the time of Babur and Humayun and in the early days of the reign of Akbar and throughout that of Aurangzeb, were not exempt from the payment of *jizya*. We know definitely that the ruler of Udaipur was required to cede a certain part of his territory in lieu of *jizya* while, at the same time, he had placed a contingent of his troops at the disposal of Aurangzeb. It is, thus, obvious that *jizya* had a religious colour about it. The ruling of *qazi* Mughis-ud-din of Bayana about this tax has already

been given in a former chapter. It will be too much in view of the facts of the history of the entire period to maintain that *jizya* was a secular tax like *Turush ka danda* or any other poll tax.

Women and children, monks and beggars and the blind and the cripple were exempt from *jizya*. For purposes of this tax the entire Hindu population was divided into three grades. The first grade paid at the rate of 48 *dirhams*, the second at 24 *dirhams* and the third at 12 *dirhams*.

Other taxes. There was a tax on import, which was $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on merchandise; on horses it was 5 per cent. From the non-Muslims the excise or import tax was charged at double the rate of that from the Muslims. Then there were a house tax, a grazing tax, a water tax and a number of other minor taxes. The State charged one-fifth of all minerals and one-fifth of treasure acquired by an individual. The State also claimed a share of unstamped bullion minted and found in an area conquered by the Muslims. All the property of men dying in the State and without heirs went to the State. Another important source of income was the presents made to the Sultans by the people, officers and nobles. This brought in a large revenue every year.

Land revenue. Land revenue was, of course, a most important source of the income of the Sultanate of Delhi, next only to plunder and booty acquired in the time of war. For the purpose of fiscal administration there existed four kinds of land, namely, (1) *khalisa* territory, (2) land divided into *iqtas* and held by *muqtis* either for a number of years or for lifetime, (3) the principalities of the Hindu chiefs who had come to terms with the Sultan, and (4) the land given away to Muslim scholars and saints in gift, such as *milk* or *inam* or *waqf*. The *khalisa* was directly administered by the central government. But the State dealt with local revenue officers, like *chaudharis* and *muqaddams*, and not with individual peasants. There was an *amil* or revenue collector in each sub-division (probably *shiq*) who collected revenue from the above named officers, while they, in their turn, realised it from the peasants. The State demand or scale of revenue was not based on any careful calculation and the ascertainment of the actual produce of the soil and seems to have been a summary assessment. In the *iqta* the administration, including assessment and collection of revenue, was in the hands of the *muqti* who deducted his own share and paid the surplus to the

central government. It was in his interest to show a nominal surplus and to evade payment on one pretext or another. The Sultan, therefore, appointed, on the recommendation of the *wazir*, an officer, called *khwaja* in each *iqta* to keep an eye on the revenue collection and exercise some check on the *muqti*. The possibility of collusion between the *muqti* and the *khwaja* was minimised by the presence of spies who reported directly to the central government about the activities of the local officers. The Hindu rajas who owed allegiance to the Sultan enjoyed complete autonomy in their respective States and were required to pay tribute. Similarly, *zamindars* paid a fixed revenue to the government and the peasants in their jurisdiction did not know any authority except their own landlords. The land given away as *waqf* or *inam* was free from revenue assessment and was allowed to become a hereditary possession of the grantees.

The system, as described above, continued throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi. The first ruler to introduce a vital change in the revenue policy and administration was Ala-ud-din Khalji. His revenue policy was guided by two main considerations, namely, (1) increasing the State's income to the utmost limit, and (2) keeping the people in economic want so as to prevent them from entertaining any thoughts of insubordination and rebellion. Accordingly, he undertook the following measures.

Firstly, he confiscated the land held by Muslim grantees and religious land held as *milk* (proprietary right), *inam* (free gifts), *ibarat* (pensions) and *waqf* (endowment). Most of the land of the above description was annexed to the State; but some assignees seem to have remained untouched. Secondly, he withdrew the privileges hitherto enjoyed by Hindu *muqaddams*, *khuts* and *chaudharis* who were obliged to pay taxes, like others, on the land held by them and also the house and the grazing taxes. Thirdly, he increased the state demand to one-half of the produce. Fourthly, he imposed some other taxes on the peasants in addition to the land revenue and those that were already in vogue. These were the house tax and the grazing tax. *Jizya*, customs duties and *zakat* continued to be levied, as in the time of the previous Sultans. Fifthly, he introduced the measurement of land in order to ascertain the actual produce and had the *patwari's* records requisitioned to provide the revenue settlement. Sixthly, he established an efficient machinery for the rigorous collection of all kinds of revenue and did not make any allowance for any damage,

natural or accidental, to the crops. Though measurement could not be applied to all the provinces of his domirion, the aim of his policy was to increase the revenue considerably and to make all classes of the people, such as peasants, landlords, merchants and traders, to shoulder the burden of taxation.

Ala-ud-din's policy, being too rigid and unpopular, could not be followed by his weak successors. Many of his harsh regulations were allowed to fall into decay; but the scale of revenue fixed by him was not altered. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq softened the rigour of Ala-ud-din's revenue policy and administration, though he did not, in any way, lessen his scale of demand of the State which continued to be one-half of the produce as before. In the first place, he recognised the principle of making due allowances for damages to the crops due to natural calamity or accident and remitted a proportionate revenue. Secondly, he allowed the *khuts*, *muqaddams* and *chaudharis* to enjoy exemption from the taxes on their land and on their grazing animals. Thirdly, he laid down that State demand from any *iqta* should not be enhanced more than one-tenth or one-eleventh of the standard assessment in a year. But Ghiyas-ud-din's fiscal administration was marred by two defects, namely, the abandonment of measurement and reversion to the policy of assessing the revenue by guess or computation, and the resumption of the practice of granting assignment of land to civil and military officers.

Muhammad bin Tughluq, who followed him, was animated by the desire of systematising the fiscal administration of the realm. Under his instructions the department of revenue undertook the compilation of a comprehensive register of the income and expenditure of the Sultanate with a view to introduce a uniform standard of land revenue and to make sure that no village remained unassessed; but his necessary and useful work remained unfinished. His next experiment was to increase the scale of taxes, other than the land revenue which continued to be charged at 50 per cent, in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. The measure was bitterly resented; but the Sultan continued to realise the taxes at the enhanced rate inspite of a famine due to the failure of rains. The result was a fearful rebellion. Yet he would not withdraw the ordinance. He advanced loans and sunk irrigation wells, but it was too late. The entire doab was ruined. The Sultan's other reform was the establishment of the department of agriculture, called *diwan-i-kohi*, with a view to extending the area under cultivation. But, this, too, failed.

Firoz Tughluq's accession in 1351 marks a turning point in the agrarian policy of the Sultanate of Delhi. He paid great attention to the revenue affairs and sincerely desired to foster the material prosperity of the people. First of all, he healed the wounds inflicted by his late cousin and wrote off the *taqavi* loans, increased the salaries of the revenue staff and abolished the use of physical coercion to which the governors and revenue officers were subjected. Next he fixed the revenue of the entire *khalisa* land on a permanent basis after careful and laborious examination of local records. Thirdly, he abolished as many as twenty-four vexatious taxes, including the much-hated grazing and house taxes, and charged, in conformity with the Quranic law, only five taxes—*kharaj*, *khams*, *jizya*, *zakat* and irrigation tax. Fourthly, he constructed as many as five canals and sunk numerous wells for the irrigation of fields. Fifthly, he encouraged the cultivation of superior crops, such as, sugarcane, oil-seeds, poppy, etc. Sixthly, he planted many gardens and encouraged production of fruits. These wise measures greatly enhanced the royal revenues and brought about general material prosperity of the people.

Firoz's administration, however, suffered from three great defects, namely, (1) the application of the principle of farming out of land revenue, (2) the pernicious customs of granting assignments of land revenue and permitting the public sale of the assignment deeds, and (3) the extension of the scope and the rigorous realisation of *jizya*.

Although the just and generous rules of Firoz Tughluq's revenue administration fell into negligence during the weak days of his successors and the confusion following Timur's invasion, yet in essence they continued to be followed by the later Tughluqs and the Sayyids. When the Lodis came to power, they divided almost the entire land in their dominion among the important Afghan families. The *khalisa* land was greatly reduced in size and importance. Sikandar Lodi made an attempt to revive measurement, but otherwise, he made no important alteration in the revenue rules and regulations.

There is a controversy regarding the scale of revenue demanded by the Sultans of Delhi. According to a modern scholar it was one-fifth of the produce during most of the period. This conclusion is based on guess and seems to be erroneous. The Muslim law, as expounded by orthodox jurists, lays down that the rate of *kharaj* should vary from one-tenth to one-half of the produce. We know that in every Muslim land as well as in India, the State demanded

one-tenth of the produce from the Muslim cultivator, if his land was not irrigated from the waters of the State canals or public tanks or wells. On the other hand, if his land was watered by State canals or wells, he had to pay a water tax as well. As throughout our period Hindu traders had to pay the excise tax at a rate which was double of that chargeable from the Muslims, it can be legitimately inferred from this that the Hindu cultivators must have been charged double the revenue of what the Muslim cultivators were required to pay, that is, the scale of land revenue in the case of Hindu peasants must have been one-fifth of the produce. If this rule was at all followed, it could have been so during the rule of the so-called Slave kings only. Ala-ud-din Khalji increased the scale of land revenue to one-half of the produce and all his successors on the throne of Delhi down to the extinction of the Sultanate continued to make the same demand. It has been established by modern research that Sher Shah charged one-third,[2] which was considered to be a legitimate and just demand during his time and which was later adopted by Akbar the Great. Considering these circumstances, it seems probable that even during the days of the so-called Slave kings the State demand was one-third of the gross produce of the soil. But throughout the period several other taxes besides the land revenue were levied upon the peasants. The chronicles tell us that Qutub-ud-din Aibak had abolished all un-Islamic taxes and that they had to be abolished again and again by several other Sultans. It is, therefore, clear that throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi the peasant was required to pay many taxes over and above the land revenue. It is irrelevant to enquire as to who was responsible for the continuance of these taxes and whether they went to fill the coffers of the Sultan or were appropriated by corrupt revenue officers, governors and ministers. The irresistible conclusion, however, is that the peasants were not allowed to enjoy more than one-third of the fruits of their labour.

The main items of expenditure were the Sultan's household, civil and military services, religious endowments and charity, wars and rebellions and huge presents sent to the Khalifa and to the religious places outside India.

JUSTICE AND PEACE

The *diwan-i-qaza* (department of justice) was the weakest and most ill-organised department of administration. The Sultan, being

[2] Refer to *Sher Shah And His Successors* by A. L. Srivastava, pp. 71-76.

the fountainhead of justice, was responsible for upholding and maintaining the Quranic law which, in theory, was the only law recognised by the Sultanate of Delhi. He was, therefore, the head of the department of justice, held court twice a week and decided cases in person. But, though normally the highest court of appeal, he often tried original cases also. When called upon to decide religious cases, the Sultan was assisted by the chief *sadr* (*sadr-us-sudur*) and the *mufti*; but in secular cases he had the assistance of the chief *qazi* (*qazi-ul-qazat*). Throughout our period these two high offices, namely, those of the chief *sadr* and the chief *qazi* had one and the same person as their incumbent. This person sat with the king in two capacities—as chief *sadr* in religious cases and as chief *qazi* in secular cases.

The chief *qazi* was designated as the head of the department of justice, but he was only its nominal head; for the department was, in fact, controlled by the Sultan himself. The chief *qazi* constituted himself as the highest court of appeal only when the Sultan's court was not in session. Even when he acted as the highest court of appeal, his decisions were liable to be revised by the Sultan. Nor was the chief *qazi* the real administrative head; for we are told that the Sultan appointed provincial and district *qazi* and *amir-i-dad* in important cities, may be on the chief *qazi's* recommendation, and was the *de facto* incharge of their postings, transfer and dismissal. The chief *qazi* lived and held his court at the capital. He was assisted by a *mufti* (legal interpreter); he supervised the provincial judges and heard appeals from their decisions.

There was an *amir-i-dad* in big cities whose office seems to correspond to that of the modern city magistrate. He had two duties to discharge, that is, to apprehend criminals and to try cases with the help of the *qazi*. He was, thus, both a judge and an executive officer. In the latter capacity, he was required to enforce the *qazi's* decisions and to co-operate with the *muhtasib* in enforcing his regulations. He had an assistant, known as the *naib-i-dadbak*.

There was a *qazi* in every province and one in every district. Important cities had *qazis* and *amir-i-dads*. The government left small towns and rural areas, which, in those days, comprised ninety per cent of the population, untouched and appointed no judicial officers of its own to administer justice. Fortunately, our villages were tiny self-sufficient commonwealths and had their own *panchayats*,

which not only decided all their disputes but also enforced their decisions. The people, therefore were happy to be left undisturbed by their foreign masters whose rule over the villages existed only for the collection of revenue.

Notwithstanding Dr. I. H. Qureshi's rhetoric, contemporary Persian chronicles yield the above picture, in brief. Their perusal reveals glaring defects in the administration of justice. There was no proper grading of the courts with clearly defined jurisdictions. The suitor could lodge a complaint or file a suit anywhere he liked. He could, for instance, go to the court of the *qazi* of his town or to that of the provincial *qazi* or even to the Sultan's court. The highest court of appeal also tried original cases, that is, cases in the first instance. Then, the judicial procedure was not uniform all over the kingdom and was very irregular. Cases were started without due enquiries. The proceedings of the court were not recorded and the trials were summary trials. The law administered by the courts was the Quranic law. Cases between Muslims and Hindus were decided by the *qazi* on the basis of this law. Customary law which was administered in the trial of secular cases in which the parties belonged to different faiths, was not the written law and hence could be interpreted according to the individual judge's lights and whims. Great injustice must generally have been the result in regard to a suppliant for justic whose religion differed from that of the *qazi*.

The penal law was very severe. Culprits were usually punished with mutilation and death. The usual practice was to make use of force and torture to extort confession from the convicts. Although the government followed the policy of minimum interference with the social affairs of the Hindus and applied what was designated as the *ghair tashrii* law in deciding their cases, yet grave injustice must have been the result, as, in those days, there were no *vakils* to place the complainant's point of view before the judge. The chief *qazi* was at once the chief religious officer (*sadr-us-sudur*) and the chief judge. Obviously, such a person could hardly adopt a strictly neutral and impartial attitude in a case in which the parties belonged to different religions. Moreover, the chief *qazi*, and the *qazis* in the provinces, districts and towns had many other duties of a secular as well as religious nature to perform, which must have diverted their attention from their main duty. They had, for instance, to supervise and manage the property of the orphans and the lunatics,

to execute testamentary dispositions and to supervise the property given away in endowments. They had also to help destitute Muslim widows and to find suitable husbands for them. Another work entrusted to them was the prevention of encroachment on public thoroughfares and open spaces. They were required to nominate persons to take charge of contested property. Their multifarious activities, which had little to do with their judicial duties, must have greatly stood in the way of their administering even-handed justice. Above all, most of the area had no government judicial officers and the people were obliged to have recourse to devise their own means to settle their disputes.

There was no police worth the name except a *kotwal* in important cities. The term *kotwal* is derived from the Sanskrit word 'kotpal' which shows that he must have originally been a military officer. He had a small contingent of men under him and his main duty was to maintain peace and order in his jurisdiction. There was another officer, known as *muhtasib*, in every province and in every important town. His duties were partly secular. Besides enforcing the Islamic regulations and seeing that the Muslims said their five daily prayers and kept the fast of Ramzan and observed other religious ordinances in their daily life, he had to control the markets and to regulate weights and measures. He enforced the regulation relating to the prohibition from intoxicants, such as, liquor, *bhang*, *ganja* and other drugs of a like nature. There was no police in the villages and even in small towns. There were no well-constituted prison-houses. Old forts and castles were utilised as prisons. The prison administration was lax and corruption among jail officials was common.

RELIGIOUS POLICY

Throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi, Islam was the religion of the State. It was considered to be the duty of the Sultan and his government to defend and to uphold the principles of this religion and to propagate them among the masses. According to the Quranic law it is the highest duty of a Muslim king to put down idolatry, to fight a holy war (*jihad*) against non-Muslims and to convert *dar-ul-harb* (non-Muslim territory) into *dar-ul-Islam* (Muslim land). In view of the clear injunctions given in their holy book, the *Quran*, the Sultans of Delhi were anxious to convert their Hindu subjects to Islam; but practical difficulties and political wisdom compelled them not to indulge in a perpetual war against them. Never-

theless, some of the over-zealous Sultans, such as Firoz Tughluq and Sikandar Lodi, utilised state machinery and funds for religious propaganda. But the politically-minded Sultans, like Ala-ud-din Khalji or Muhammad bin Tughluq, refrained from making use of state resources and machinery for religious propaganda and proselytisation. Yet even the most enlightened among them, like Muhammad bin Tughluq, upheld the principles of their faith and refused permission to repair Hindu or Buddhist temples. For instance, when the emperor of China sent an embassy to Delhi to request permission to repair Budhhist temples which had suffered destruction at the hands of the Sultan's army during his Qarajal expedition, Muhammad bin Tughluq refused it on the ground that his religion forbade him from acceding to the request. Thus even during the reign of the so-called liberal-minded Sultans, the Hindus had no permission to build new temples or to repair old ones. Throughout the period, they were known as *zimmis*, that is, people living under guarantee and the guarantee was that they would enjoy restricted freedom in following their religion if they paid the *jizya*. The *zimmis* were not to celebrate their religious rites openly or offensively and never to do any propaganda on behalf of their religion. A number of disabilities were imposed upon them in matters of State employment and enjoyment of civic rights. In fact they were not treated as full-fledged citizens of the State. It was a practice with the Sultans to destroy the Hindu temples and the images therein. Firoz Tughluq and Sikandar Lodi prohibited the Hindus from bathing at the ghats in the sacred rivers and encouraged them in every possible way to embrace the Muslim religion. The converts were exempted from the *jizya* and given posts in the State service and even granted rewards in cash or by grant of land. In short, there was not only no real freedom for the Hindus to follow their religion, but the state followed a policy of intolerance and persecution. The contemporary Muslim chronicles abound in detailed descriptions of desecration of images and destruction of temples and of the conversion of hundreds and thousands of the Hindus. Our religious buildings and places bear witness to the iconoclastic zeal of the Sultans and their followers. One has only to visit Ajmer, Mathura, Ayodhya, Banaras and other holy cities to see the half broken temples and images of those times with their heads, faces, hands and feet defaced and demolished.

Some of the modern Muslim writers have made an endeavour to show that the Sultans did not follow a policy of intolerence and persecution. They maintain that temples and idols were destroyed only during war; that the Hindu temples were converted into mosques and, therefore, not shown any disrespect; and that by putting down idolatry the Sultans taught the Hindus to believe in one God and, therefore, rendered them a service. One writer (Dr. Sufi, *vide* his *History of Kashmir*) has gone to the extent of saying that certain sections among the Hindus, like the Arya Samajists, preach against idol worship. Medieval Muslims enforced what the Arya Samajists have been preaching now. Dr. Muhammad Nazim maintains that the Hindu temples, being store-houses of wealth, invited trouble for themselves. A scholarly theologian, Maulana Sulaiman Nadvi, advises us not to take the hyperbolic statements of the contemporary historians, like Minhaj-us-Siraj, Zia-ud-din Barani, Shams-i-Siraj Afif and Yahiya bin Ahmad and others who have given graphic descriptions of religious persecution, temple-destructions and image-breaking in their works, too seriously, as they were meant, according to him, for the perusal of the Islamic peoples outside India.

It is not necessary to examine these views at length. The arguments are palpably weak and their authors unaccustomed to see the other side of a case. To take up the first, it is easy to imagine that a fanatical Sultan could declare an unprovoked war against his independent Hindu neighbour and then carry on a campaign of destruction of temples and images and conversion of the innocent Hindu population. He would, of course, have the self-righteous satisfaction that he was doing all this during war. And his modern apologist, knowing though he may be that ninety-nine out of a hundred wars fought by the Sultans of Delhi were unprovoked wars, would justify the wanton persecution by quoting the exploded slogan that "everything is fair in love and war." Moreover, there are numerous instances on record that in normal times of peace temple-destruction and image-breaking was often resorted to. As regards the second argument, it would be perhaps permissible to enquire as to how would the author of the argument feel if a mosque were transformed into a temple. It will, of course, remain a sacred place inspite of its transformation. As for the plea that the much-valued unity of Godhood was impressed upon the Hindu population by destroying stone images, it will be admitted that it defeated its own

object and looked like sending people to heaven by force and against their will. It is unfortunate that our Turkish and Afghan rulers could not see that the Hindus in general have believed in the unity of God through the ages and that the image-worship, according to them, is only a means to an end. The great Muslim scholar and savant, Al-Beruni, clearly realised this. Dr. Nazim seems to belong to that old fraternity which imposed 'purda' on women lest their looks should invite trouble from the vagrant males. He will perhaps appreciate the naked truth that the sin of the Hindus consisted in their failure to make an example of the fanatical brigands rather than their thrift and piling up of wealth. Maulana Sulaiman Nadvi's advice amounts to this : do not believe in the detailed account and facts and figures given by the contemporary Muslim writers for they were propagandists; have faith in the generalisations of modern writers, for propaganda has no place in the writings of the 20th century scholars. The modern reader is free to draw his own conclusions. He can easily separate the wheat from the chaff.

The Sultans of Delhi and a vast majority of the Muslim population of the Sultanate being orthodox Sunnis, were absolutely opposed to the Shias and other dissenting sects in Islam. They were animated by a firm desire to root out heresy. In fact, their policy aimed at extirpating dissent in Islam. Karmathians, Shias, Mahdavis and other sects were, therefore, mercilessly repressed and their practices put down. Sometimes their leaders were tortured and even put to death. The Shias were particularly looked down upon as heretics. Firoz Tughluq took credit for placing a ban on the practices of the Shia religion and for persecuting its followers. He ordered their religious books to be publicly burnt. As far as possible, the Shias were not given posts in the State service. No king during this period employed Persian Shias in key-posts or in places of trust and responsibility. It was inevitable that the followers of dissenting Islamic sects should be dissatisfied. The discontent of the Karmathians found expression in open rebellions and violence in the time of Iltutmish and also in that of Raziah; but they were put down with a high hand. A majority of the *shaikhs*, who were liberal-minded mystics, were also looked at with disfavour, because they were unorthodox in their views and had a large following. In short, the period was one of rigid and narrowminded religious orthodoxy.

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THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER POLICY : MONGOL INVASIONS

The problem : the scientific frontier of India

During the medieval period, when steam-ships were unknown our country was vulnerable in the north-western corner only, as the eastern Himalayas and the Assam hills—the only other part that could yield passage to a foreign invader—were too difficult in that age to be crossed by an army of invasion. It was through this passage that foreign invaders entered India during ancient and medieval times. The policy of our rulers through the ages, therefore, was to defend the north-western frontier. But this frontier, owing to the peculiar configuration of the mountain ranges in the area, could not be successfully defended and controlled without an effective military possession and control of the area extending from Kabul *via* Ghazni to Kandhar which commands routes to the fertile valleys of the Panjab. The Kabul-Ghazni-Kandhar line, flanked by the Hindu-kush, may, therefore, be correctly designated as the "scientific frontier of India." Side by side with acquiring and defending this line, it was equally essential to control the turbulent tribes that inhabited the region lying between Kashmir and the sea, as through this belt of land ran the main passages from the Panjab to the above line and *vice versa*. The enormity of the problem was heightened by the presence of war-like and independent tribes, like the Khokhars in the Salt Range region, situated in the northern half of the Sindh Sagar Doab. The Khokhars carried their depredations into the heart of the Panjab and added to the difficulties connected with the protection and defence of our north-western frontier during the medieval age.

The actual frontier, 1206—1217

The problem did not present any special difficulty to the Ghaznavide rulers of the Panjab during the 11th and 12th centuries, as Kabul, Ghazni and Kandhar belonged to them. Nor was their successor, Muhammad of Ghur, called upon to meet an unprecedented

emergency for the same reason. But, after Muhammad's death, the first Sultan of Delhi, Qutub-ud-din Aibak, made a feeble attempt to reach the scientific frontier of India by occupying Ghazni in 1208. He met with failure and had to abandon Ghazni. Soon after this, the Sultan was faced with a new problem. Ghazni had been annexed by the Khwarizm emperor, the eastern frontier of which now touched the Indus. As the infant Delhi Sultanate came into contact with a powerful neighbour, its north-western frontier was directly threatened. But, fortunately, the boundary between the Delhi Sultanate and the Khwarizm empire, which was the river Indus, remained undisturbed, as, owing to the rapid expansion of the Mongols, the Khwarizm empire itself was trembling for its safety. Within a decade the danger overtook the empire; the ferocious Mongols tore the Central Asian Muslim State to pieces and occupied its territories, including Afghanistan, Ghazni and Peshawar. The river Indus, thus, ceased to be the north-western boundary of the Sultanate and its frontier was pushed back into the interior of the Panjab. In view of these developments there was no question of the Sultan's trying to obtain control of the "scientific frontier of India." The problem before them, throughout the thirteenth century, was how to retain what they had possessed, namely, the country enclosed by a line stretching from Sialkot to Nandanah in the Salt Range, which Iltutmish had brought under his possession soon after 1217.

Iltutmish and the Mongols

By 1220 the Mongol hordes under their great leader, Changiz Khan, had brought about the complete annihilation of the Khwarizm empire and driven its ruler, Ala-ud-din Muhammad, into the Caspian Sea to die there (1220). Ala-ud-din's heir, Jalal-ud-din Mangbarni, too, fled in terror from Khurasan to Ghazni. As Changiz pursued him from Talkan, he quitted Ghazni and fled to the frontier of our country. Being overtaken on the Indus, he was obliged to turn back and fight, but he was defeated. In sheer desperation he sent his family in a boat to be drowned in the Indus, and, flinging his own horse into the river, crossed over to the left bank and sneaked into the Sindh Sagar Doab. It was lucky that Changiz Khan, who stayed near the right bank of the Indus for three months, did not decide to pursue the fugitive prince across the river and thus violate the independence of the Sultanate of Delhi. Had he chosen to do so, the nascent Turkish kingdom in India would have succumbed to the

Mongol onslaught, as the older and more powerful Muslim kingdoms of Central Asia had already done. But Iltutmish seems to have arrived at some kind of understanding with the Mongol leader, whereby he had, probably, agreed not to provide any shelter or protection to the fugitive Mangbarni. At any rate, he wisely followed the policy of keeping the Khwarizm prince at an arm's length so as to avoid giving provocation to the Mongols. In view of the Sultan's friendly attitude, Changiz's reported decision to return to Karaqoram through India, for which he is said to have asked Iltutmish's permission, was abandoned and the Sultanate was saved from a great catastrophe. Changiz Khan returned to his country through the Hindukush in the winter of 1222.

Effect of Mangbarni's activity in Sindh

Though Changiz scrupulously respected India's sovereignty, his followers continued to harass Mangbarni and made a number of raids on the *cis*-Indus region. The Khwarizm prince, after entering the Salt Range, collected a small army, defeated the Hindu chief of the Salt Range and prepared to carve out a kingdom for himself. Changiz Khan, thereafter, sent an army from Ghazni to pursue the fugitive prince. Mangbarni, therefore, retreated towards Lahore and sent an envoy, Ain-ul-mulk, to Delhi to request for shelter. Iltutmish refused it on the plea that the climate of Delhi would not suit him. Mangbarni, therefore, made an alliance with the Khokhar chief who gave his daughter in marriage to him, besides supplying him with military assistance. The Mongol troops, who were sent to pursue the prince did not follow him into the Panjab, probably because they had been instructed by Changiz Khan not to do so. They only plundered the neighbourhood of the Salt Range.

Assisted by a Khokhar army, Mangbarni invaded the territory of Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, who fled to Multan. He captured Sehwan, besides some other important places, and even sent an expedition to Anhilwara from where he obtained some booty. Another Mongol army now appeared in his pursuit. Mangbarni, therefore, left India, by way of Makran, for Iraq in 1224.

The result of his three years' stay in the western Panjab and Sindh was that the Mongols brought the *cis*-Indus tracts under their influence. The Mongol army under Turai captured Nandanah and proceeded to Multan. He besieged Qubachah in that city. Multan

was about to fall when excessive heat compelled the Mongols to withdraw. While on the return journey, they plundered the districts of Lahore and Multan. Even after their return, the Panjab and Multan continued to remain in a state of turmoil. The tribes of the Salt Range became bolder than before and attempted to take advantage of the confusion. They occupied the whole of the northern part of the Sindh Sagar Doab and spread further east beyond the river Bias and plundered Lahore. Only Baniyan, west of the Indus, remained in the hands of Hasan Qarlugh, a lieutenant of Mangbarni. Another officer of Mangbarni, named Hasan Pai, held possession of the most of Qubachah's territory, including Multan. The Mongol movement crushed Qubachah's power and gave Iltutmish an opportunity to defeat him and annex his territory, including Multan and Uch. About the year 1228 the Delhi Sultanate, thus, came into direct contact with the Mongols, who had made Afghanistan their base of operations.

In 1229 the Mongols had decided on permanent conquest and annexation of Khurasan and Afghanistan. This policy led to a series of Mongol operations in the territories lying just beyond the north-western frontier of the Delhi kingdom. In 1235 the Mongols captured Siestan in western Afghanistan. After that year they crossed into Derajat valley leading to upper Sindh. At the same time, they pushed into the upper Indus region. Owing to these hostile movements Hasan Qarlugh found his position untenable in Baniyan and decided to carve out a kingdom for himself in Sindh. He even wanted to form an anti-Mongol alliance with Delhi; but Raziah, who was the ruler of Delhi at this time, refused to entangle herself in the affair and thus court Mongol hostility. Her policy of friendly neutrality obliged the Mongols not to violate the territory of the Sultanate. Nevertheless, the inner frontier of the Sultante was pushed back to the Chinab.

Multan, Sindh and West Panjab in Mongol hands

With the fall of Raziah in 1240 came to an end Delhi's understanding with the Mongols. In 1241 Bahadur Tair, at the head of a huge Mongol army, crossed the Indus and, for the first time, besieged Lahore. The governor fled to save his skin, but the people of the city put up a brave resistance. They had, however, to submit. The Mongols destroyed the town and its defences. After their return, only a part of the *iqta* of Lahore reverted to the possession of Delhi.

The river Ravi now became the virtual boundary between the Sultanate and the Mongol sphere of influence.

In 1245 Multan and Sindh were also lost to Delhi. The former was captured by Hasan Qarlugh, while the latter was in the possession of the descendants of the rebel Kabir Khan. These two provinces were recovered by Balban during the reign of Alauddin Masud Shah (1245).

The next Mongol invasion was undertaken by Sali Bahadur who besieged Multan in 1247. He raised the siege on getting an idemnity of one lakh *dinars*. Next, he proceeded to Lahore whose governor was compelled to pay a large indemnity and become a vassal of the Mongols. Sometime after Nasir-ud-din's accession, Balban undertook an expedition into the heart of the Panjab; but he does not seem to have been successful in recovering the tract beyond the river Ravi which had, for some time, been under the Mongol sphere of influence. Similarly, Multan and Sindh remained in foreign hands till 1250 when they were recovered by a powerful military governor of the Sultanate, named Sher Khan. Nevertheless Delhi's hold on these provinces was precarious and they changed hands a number of times. The situation was complicated by the fact that some of the nobles and officers of Delhi were in treasonable negotiations with the Mongols and even went over to their side. Sher Khan was one such officer. He was won over by Balban after considerable difficulty.

A number of Mongol invasions occurred during the period following Nasir-ud-din's accession, particularly in Multan and Sindh. Balban, who held the post of *naib*, made great military preparations to oppose the progress of the invaders, but he did not cross the north-western boundary of the Sultanate to invade the territory under the Mongol sphere of influence. He seems to have acquiesced in the transference of the whole of Sindh, Multan and West Panjab to the Mongols. The Sultan, also, seems to have avoided hostility with the vassals of the Mongols. Balban transferred Sher Khan from Bhatinda in 1258, as he was meditating recovery of Multan and Uch from the Mongol governor, Kashlu Khan. This was done in conformity with the policy of avoiding hostilities with the Mongols. In view of this tacit agreement, there was an exchange of envoys between Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud and the Mongol chief, Hulagu. It is, thus, clear that the court of Delhi had reconciled itself to the loss of Multan, Sindh and a greater portion of the Panjab beyond the river Bias.

Balban's frontier policy

The provinces of Multan and Sindh were, however, recovered by Delhi during the early days of Balban's reign; but the Mongols could not be dislodged from the north-western Panjab. Nevertheless, Lahore was wrested from enemy hands. It was incorporated in the frontier province of Multan and Dipalpur. During the early years of this Sultan's reign, Sher Khan was appointed governor of the frontier province of Bhatinda, Dipalpur and Lahore which was constituted into a military command. After Sher Khan's death, Multan, Sindh and Dipalpur were placed in the charge of Balban's eldest son, Prince Muhammad. The remaining parts of the frontier, which consisted of Samana and Sunam, were given to the second son of the Sultan, named Bughra Khan. Thus, Balban placed the entire north-western frontier in the custody and care of his sons. The governor of Samana and Sunam was to work under the orders of that of Multan and Sindh. He built a line of forts on his north-western frontier and garrisoned them with seasoned Pathan troops. A standing army, 17,000 to 18,000 strong, was set apart for the defence of the frontier and was posted in this region. The rest of the army was also kept in a state of preparedness for an emergency. These admirable arrangements so strengthened the frontier that, inspite of many vigorous invasions undertaken by the Mongols, they could make no headway throughout Balban's reign. About 1279 the Mongols renewed their attack and ravaged the country as far as Sunam; but the combined armies of Prince Muhammad from Multan, Bughra Khan from Samana and Malik Mubarak Bektar from Delhi completely defeated the enemy and drove him back to the West Panjab. The Mongol menace was warded off, but only for a temporary period. In 1285 the Mongols, under their leader, Timur Khan, again invaded Lahore and Dipalpur. Prince Muhammad proceeded against them. But he was killed, fighting in an ambush, in February, 1286. Inspite of this disaster, the defence arrangements of Balban proved so strong that the Mongols could not penetrate any further and had to beat a retreat. The Mongol menace, however, profoundly affected Balban's domestic and foreign policies. Not only had he to maintain a powerful force at an enormous cost, he was also obliged to give up all thought of aggressive conquest of the territories belonging to independent princes.

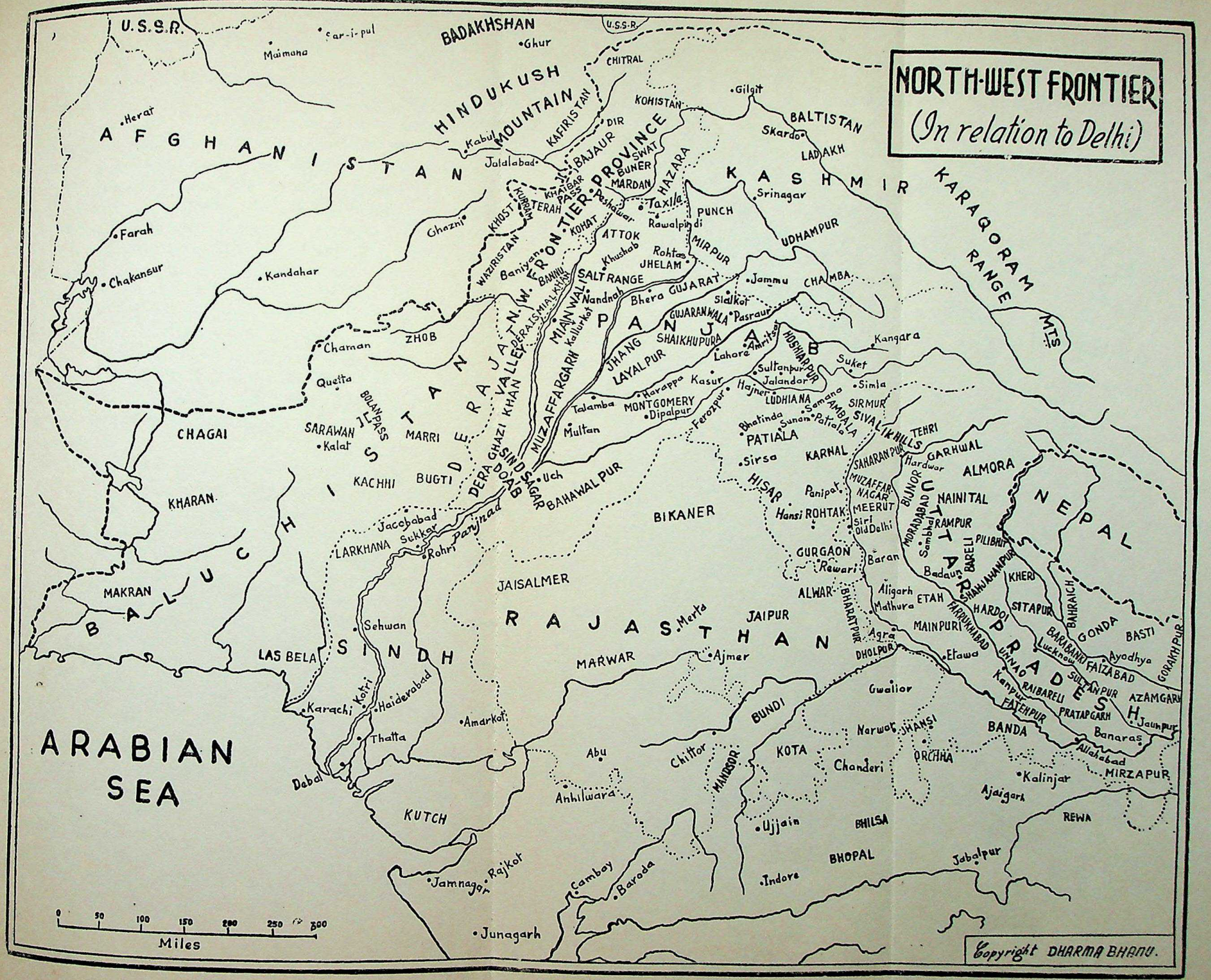
Two Mongol invasions of Multan and lower Panjab took place

in the time of Kaiqubad, in the course of the second of which the invaders over-ran the territory from Multan to Lahore; but both times they were driven back with heavy losses. Owing to the strength of Balban's frontier defence, or in view of the political truce subsisting between them and the Sultanate of Delhi, or owing to both these causes, the Mongols made no attempt to attack Delhi till the end of the so-called Slave dynasty. With the accession of the Khaljis, they changed their policy from one of concentrating their attention on raiding and, if possible, on conquering Multan, Sindh and the Panjab, to that of endeavouring to conquer Delhi itself. With their base in the Panjab, they now launched a series of aggressive campaigns against the capital of the Sultanate.

Mongol attacks on Delhi: defence arrangements of the Khaljis

The first and the only Mongol invasion during the reign of Jalal-ud-din Khalji took place in 1292. A Mongol army, estimated between one lakh and one lakh and fifty thousand, under a grandson of Hulagu, penetrated into the frontier province of the Sultanate and reached as far as Sunam. The Sultan encountered the invaders who were defeated and compelled to retreat. Jalal-ud-din permitted some of the Mongols, including Ulghu, a descendant of Changiz Khan, to settle down in Delhi. They accepted Islam and took up service under the Sultan who gave his daughter in marriage to Ulghu. These Mongol settlers became known as 'New Muslims'.

The reign of Ala-ud-din was marked by numerous Mongol attempts to conquer Delhi. The earliest attempt was made within a few months of his accession. Zafar Khan, a friend and commander of the new Sultan, defeated the invaders with great slaughter near Jalandar. The next invasion took place in 1297. The Mongols this time took the fortress of Sibi in Multan, but Zafar Khan again defeated them and took 1,700 of the invaders, including their leader, their wives and daughters, prisoners and sent them to Delhi. In 1299 the Mongols under Qutlugh Khwaja made a serious attempt to conquer Delhi. They besieged the capital and cut off supplies to it. The danger was so great that *kotwal* Ala-ul-mulk advised the Sultan not to risk his all by attacking them; but Ala-ud-din brushed aside this advice and decided to attack the Mongols. Zafar Khan led the charge and defeated them; but he himself was surrounded and slain. Nevertheless, the impression made by Zafar Khan was so great that the enemy had to beat a hurried retreat. For over three


NORTH-WEST FRONTIER
(In relation to Delhi)
U.S.S.R.
BADAKHSHAN
Ghur
Maimana
Sar-i-pul
HINDUKUSH MOUNTAIN
CHITRAL
KOHISTAN
Gilgit
BALTISTAN
Skardo
LADAKH
KASHMIR
KARAQORAM RANGE
MTS
AFGHANISTAN
Herat
Kabul
Jalalabad
KAFIRISTAN
DIR
BAJAUR
SWAT
BUNER
MARDAN
HAZARA
Taxila
Peshawar
KHAIBAR PASS
KURRAM
TERAH
KHOST
WAZIRISTAN
Baniyan
BANNU
N.W. FRONTIER PROVINCE
KOHAT
ATTOK
Khushab
Rawalpindi
PUNCH
MIRPUR
Rohtas
JHELAM
UDHAMPUR
Srinagar
Farah
Chakansur
Kandahar
Ghazni
SALT RANGE
Nandnah
Bhera
GUJARAT
Jammu
CHAMBA
Sialkot
GUJARANWALA
Pasraur
PANJAB
Kangara
Suket
Simla
SHAIKHUPURA
Lahore
Amritsar
HOSHIARPUR
Sultanpur
Jalandar
LAYALPUR
JHANG
Kasur
Harappa
MONTGOMERY
Dipalpur
Talamba
Multan
Ferozpur
Hajner
LUDHIANA
Samana
AMBALA
SIRMUR
SIVALIK HILLS
TEHRI
Bhatinda
Sunam
Patiala
PATIALA
Sirsa
KARNAL
SAHARANPUR
Hardwar
GARHWAL
ALMORA
NEPAL
Chaman
ZHOB
Quetta
BOLAN PASS
SARAWAN
Kalat
MARRI
CHAGAI
KACHHI
BUGTI
DERAJAT
DERA GHAZI KHAN
VALLEY
MUZAFFARGARH
Kallurkot
SINDSAGAR DOAB
Uch
BAHAWALPUR
HISAR
Panipat
MUZAFFARNAGAR
MEERUT
Hansi
ROHTAK
Siri
Old Delhi
BIJNOR
MORADABAD
Sambhal
NAINITAL
RAMPUR
UTTAR PRADESH
PILIBHIT
BARELI
Badaun
SHAHJAHANPUR
KHERI
SITAPUR
BAHRAICH
GONDA
BASTI
GORAKHPUR
Ayodhya
FAIZABAD
AZAMGARH
Jaunpur
Banaras
Allahabad
MIRZAPUR
Lucknow
BARABANKI
SULTANPUR
PRATAPGARH
RAIBARELI
FATEHPUR
Kanpur
UNNAO
FARRUKHABAD
HARDOI
MAINPURI
Etawa
Agra
DHOLPUR
Aligarh
Mathura
ETAH
BHARATPUR
Baran
GURGAON
Rewari
ALWAR
BIKANER
JAISALMER
RAJASTHAN
Merta
JAIPUR
Ajmer
MARWAR
Jacobabad
Sukkar
Rohri
Panjnad
LARKHANA
KHARAN
MAKRAN
BALUCHISTAN
LAS BELA
SINDH
Sehwan
Kotri
Haiderabad
Karachi
Thatta
Amarkot
Dabal
KUTCH
Abu
Anhilwara
Chittor
MANDSOR
BUNDI
KOTA
Gwalior
Narwar
JHANSI
ORCHHA
Chanderi
BANDA
Kalinjar
Ajaigarh
REWA
Ujjain
BHILSA
BHOPAL
Indore
Jabalpur
Jamnagar
Rajkot
Cambay
Baroda
Junagarh
ARABIAN SEA
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
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years the invaders had no courage to renew hostilities. But, being informed of Ala-ud-din's reverses in Telingana and his engagement in Rajasthan, Targhi, a Mongol leader, with an army of 1,20,000 troops, invaded Hindustan in 1303 and invested Delhi. Ala-ud-din was obliged to retire into the fortress of Siri, which, too, was surrounded. The Mongols devastated the surrounding country and carried raids into the streets of Delhi. But, owing to their inexperience of regular sieges, they had to abandon the attempt. Another invasion occurred in 1304 and was followed by a series of desperate attempts in 1306, 1307-8 and the years following; but they were all beaten. The Mongol fury spent itself in a series of all-out efforts to capture Delhi. The capital city was saved, as Ala-ud-din successfully followed Balban's policy of the defence of the frontier. He repaired and regarrisoned the frontier forts and posted a formidable army for its defence. The veteran warrior, Ghazi Tughluq, was appointed warden of the marches in 1305. The latter fought many an engagement with the Mongol marauders and kept the frontier safe from their depredations.

The later phase

After Ala-ud-din a few feeble attempts were made by the Mongols to plunder Hindustan. One such attempt was made during the reign of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq. But the leaders of the invading force were defeated and brought prisoners to Delhi. The most serious Mongol invasion occurred in 1328 or early in 1329 when the famous Mongol leader, Tarma Shirin, penetrated into the heart of the Sultanate and reached as far as Badaun. The invaders plundered and devastated the country on the way, but they were defeated by Muhammad bin Tughluq and pursued as far as Kalanaur in the modern Gurdaspur district in the Panjab. Firoz Tughluq's reign was singularly free from Mongol invasions. Their power in Central Asia was greatly weakened and they were losing their hold on the western Panjab also.

During the second half of the 14th century the Sultanate of Delhi, though very much weakened, had hardly any fear from the Mongol hordes. The Mongols in Central Asia had embraced Islam, and the great Turkish warrior, Timur, established a powerful dominion with his capital at Samarqand. Towards the end of the century, it was this man who crossed our north-western frontier and invaded the Sultanate of Delhi. As has been related in the chapter on the Tughluq dynasty, he inflicted greater misery on the country

than had been inflicted by any single invader in one single campaign before or after him.

Effects of the Mongol menace

The Mongol menace produced an important result on the internal and external policy of the Sultanate of Delhi. So long as the danger from them was great, it was always the policy of the ruler of Delhi to increase his military establishment to the highest limit. From Iltutmish down to the end of the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq the successive rulers of Delhi had to pay the greatest attention to their armies, to spend whatever they could afford on them and to take steps to see that there was, as far as possible, no internal disaffection or disunity which might be exploited by the invaders from the north-west. In view of these factors, their administration became more despotic than it would have been if there had been no danger of a foreign invasion from the north-west. Iltutmish, Balban, Ala-ud-din Khalji and Muhammad bin Tughluq had to follow the policy of militarism and to sacrifice their revenues at the altar of military preparedness. They could not afford to show any slackness or relax vigilance, as it would have brought ruin to the Sultanate like that which befell the older and more powerful Muslim kingdoms of Central Asia. Secondly, owing to the threat from the north-west, it became difficult for an average Sultan to pursue a policy of aggrandizement in the country and undertake aggressive campaigns for the conquest of independent Hindu kingdoms. Balban, for example, though animated by a strong desire for conquest, could not stir out of Delhi, and the only campaign that he undertook was that of the suppression of a rebellion in Bangal. Under these circumstances, only an extraordinarily gifted ruler, like Ala-ud-din Khalji, could play a double role, namely, defending the country from a foreign invasion and conquering independent kingdoms in the country. Muhammad Tughluq attempted to follow in his footsteps, but met with disastrous failure. The fear of Mongol invasions, thus, profoundly influenced the policy and fortunes of the Sultanate of Delhi. Had the Mongols succeeded, the history of our country would have taken a different course. The Sultanate, of course, would have come to an end; and the Mongols, being virtual Buddhists, would have gradually merged in the Hindu society like the Greeks, the Sakas and the Huns, and India would have been saved from the most baffling social and religious-cum-political problem of her history.

16

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

The ruling class

Throughout the period treated in this volume, the foreign Central Asian Muslims, particularly the Turks during the thirteenth, fourteenth and first-half of the fifteenth centuries and the Afghans in the second-half of the fifteenth and first quarter of the sixteenth centuries, formed the ruling class. Associated with the Turks were the Persians, the Arabs, the Abyssinians and the Egyptians. These foreigners constituted an exclusive ruling oligarchy. The Turk was the most jealous guardian of this foreign aristocracy. He was, in fact, its leader. Throughout the 13th century, he monopolised power and played the role of the leader of the Muslim people in Asia. He believed in the policy of racialism and rigidly excluded the Indian Musalman not only from a share in the power but also from the State service. From Qutub-ud-din Aibak down to Kaiqubad, the Sultanate rigidly adhered to the policy of Turkish monopoly of authority and Balban openly despised 'low-born non-Turks'. Towards the end of the thirteenth century countless Muslim refugees entered India from the Central Asian countries and swelled the rank of the ruling class. This led to a mixing up of the Muslims of different races and nationalities. Inter-marriages gradually brought about their fusion. The purity of blood of which the Turk was arrogantly proud, gave place to a heterogeneous race. With the advent of the rule of the Khaljis, these social forces began to work so powerfully that the Turk began to lose his monopoly of power and, for the first time in the history of the Sultanate, the policy of associating Indian converts with the administration was adopted. The credit for this must go to Ala-ud-din Khalji who appointed an able, though, in some respect, pervert, converted slave, Malik Kafur, as his deputy.

A heterogeneous ruling class could hardly be expected to work with a common aim and purpose. The nobility of the Sultanate period, though united during war against non-Muslims, was torn in times of peace by personal ambition, rivalry and even hostility, and generally pursued selfish interest to the detriment of the welfare of the State.

The Indian Muslims

The converted Muslim population, which must have been very small at the beginning of our period, began gradually to increase with the expansion of the Turkish dominion and authority. It consisted mostly of Hindus of low castes who, for various reasons, had abandoned religion of their forefathers and turned Muslims. The Indian Muslims were not only not admitted into the aristocracy of the conquerors but were not even given a share of their social and economic privileges. No Indian Musalman was appointed to a high post throughout the so-called Slave period except Imad-ud-mulk Rawat, who concealed his parentage and posed to be the offspring of foreign immigrants. Balban had an enquiry instituted into his lineage, and, when it was found that he was of Indian origin, the Sultan's regard for him was much diminished. It is said that this ruler "could not bear the sight of the native Musalman in his government." On one occasion, he administered a sharp rebuke to his courtiers for having selected an Indian Musalman for a clerical post in Amaroha. Iltutmish "is also reported to have felt an equal abhorrence for the Indian Muslims." Imad-ud-din Rayhan, the only other example of a converted Muslim to have reached a high place during this century, was the victim of a conspiracy formed by the haughty Turks. Barani's account of the cause of Rayhan's eclipse is significant. "The nobles and servants of the State," writes he, "were all Turks of pure origin and Tajiks of good stock; but Imad-ud-din was an eunuch and impotent; *he moreover belonged to one of the tribes of Hindustan.* Notwithstanding all this, he exercised authority over the heads of all these chiefs. They were disgusted with this state of affairs and could no longer endure it." A change, however, came in the fourteenth century when the Mongol successes stopped the flow of Central Asian Turks into India, and the Khaljis found it impossible to man the administration without the support of the Indian converts. So Ala-ud-din introduced the policy of appointing Indian Musalmans to some of the important posts, though no Indian convert was placed in a position which might enable him to lay down policy till the time of Firoz Tughluq when Khwaja Jahan, a Brahman convert to Islam, became prime minister. Muhammad bin Tughluq had preference for foreigners and, also, Firoz Tughluq and all other rulers of the Sultanate period from the beginning to the end; but from the middle of the 14th century the Indian Muslims begin to have a share, though a very slight share indeed, in the State services.

The Indian Muslim must for long have found himself in an unenviable position. He had little share in the administration of the country and had no place in the aristocracy of the ruling class. He was far inferior in wealth, position and innate pride to the vast majority of his Hindu countrymen. His only consolation was that he professed the same religion as his rulers and could pray with them on Fridays. His constant desire was to be treated on a footing of equality with his foreign co-religionists and to share their power and wealth. To attain his life's ambition he had to imitate foreign ways and style of living and even to abjure his ancestors. It was an irony of fate that owing to these reasons he was cut off from those who had once been his kinsmen, dead or alive, and was like an alien in his own motherland.

Main classes in Muslim community

The Muslim population was divided into two categories, namely, men of the sword and men of the pen. Those who belonged to the former category were soldiers and were mostly of foreign origin. They were either commanding officers or soldiers in the military establishment at the capital and in the provinces. They were graded into *khan*, *malik*, *amir*, *sipahsalar* and *sar-i-khail*. This was a descending hierarchy in which the *khan* occupied the highest place and *sar-i-khail* the lowest, and seems to have been only a paper organisation. In practice it had begun to disrupt quite early, so that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it had lost much of its significance. The men of the pen were mostly non-Turkish foreigners or their descendants. They supplied recruits to the clerical, educational and religious services. The most important section in this group was that of the ecclesiastics or theologians who were styled as the *ulema*. They were clergymen, teachers and judges and exercised considerable influence on the government and the rank and file of the Muslim society.

The lowest strata of the Muslim society was composed mainly of the artisan, the shopkeeper, the clerk and the petty trader. During this period Muslims were mostly confined to cities and very few lived in villages. Another element that might be included in this group was that of the slaves who were so many in that age. Every king and every noble and every well-to-do man, whether in service or in business, owned slaves who were employed in household work and in various royal *karkhanas*. There must have been many beggars among the Muslims, for poverty was looked upon as a road to piety.

The *ulema*

The most influential section of the Muslim literary class was

that which consisted of the ecclesiastics, that is, the theologians, who were called the *ulema*. They constituted the Muslim clergy. The clergy was not a hereditary body, nor did it consist of men belonging to any one race or country. There was, however, hardly any Muslim of Indian parentage among them; for, during our period, Indian Muslims did not reach the high distinction of a religious divine. Nevertheless the *ulema* were a "well-knit group and intensely conscious of their importance and jealous of their high privileges." They were to be found wherever there was a certain number of Muslim population in the country and they practically monopolised judicial, ecclesiastical and educational services. Some of them were teachers in private and government educational institutions, while others had established their own *madrsahs*. Quite a large number were *imams*, *khatibs*, *muhtasibs*, *muftis* and *qazis*, while certain others devoted their time and energy to religious propaganda. Not only all the historians of this period but almost all literary men belonged to this group. All these classes of ecclesiastics or *ulema* were supposed to be deeply learned in Islamic theology. It was open to any of them to give a ruling (*fatwa*) on any religious matter about which conflicting opinions were held.

The *ulema* from the time of the foundation of the Turkish rule were a highly influential class and were consulted by the Sultan and his ministers not only on important points of law but also on matters of State policy. They had, therefore, gradually acquired a position of great importance. They had come to believe that they had a right to be consulted in all matters, religious or secular. The early Sultans of Delhi were almost completely under their influence. Ala-ud-din Khalji was the first Sultan to show some independence and disregard of their advice. He openly declared that he did not care whether his conduct was in accordance with the spirit of the Islamic law; he did whatever he considered to be right and to be in the interest of the State, or suitable for an emergency. But his successors, being made of less stern stuff, reverted to the policy of consulting the *ulema* in all important matters. Muhammad bin Tughluq made light of the influence of this class during the early years of his reign; but he was so much harassed and vilified by the ecclesiastics that he had to confess his defeat and make amends during the later years of his rule. His successor, Firoz Tughluq, was held in thraldom to their will and could never act independently of their advice. The sway of the *ulema* over the mind of the Sultan was complete. Thereafter no strong Sultan arose who could challenge their authority.

The influence of the *ulema* on the state and their interference in political and administrative matters proved to be highly injurious. However learned the *ulema* might have been, they were not politicians or administrators. They approached problems from a narrow angle of vision. Hence their advice very often landed the ruler into difficulties. The influence of the *ulema* in religious matters, too, was baneful. They were a narrowminded class who preached war with the infidels and whose policy was one of extirpating not only idolatry but also heresy in Islam. Whenever a Sultan tried to act in conformity with the advice of the *ulema*, he had to become a religious fanatic and a persecutor of the religion of the vast majority of his subjects. The inevitable result was discontent and the undermining of the authority of the State.

THE HINDUS

Condition

The Hindus formed the vast majority of the population. Their numerical strength, in those days, could not have been less than 95 per cent of the population of the country. As before the advent of the Turks, they were rulers and in possession of the entire country, they held most of the land even during the Sultanate period. There were many well-to-do chiefs among them. The lower branches of administration, specially the department of revenue and finance, were manned by them. The *khuts*, *chaudharis* and *muqaddams* were all Hindus. The principal merchants, businessmen and traders as well as petty shopkeepers were mostly Hindus. They had almost monopolised the banking and money-lending professions. Multani traders and money-lenders are referred to in the contemporary chronicles. They lent money even to high Turkish officers and nobles. Hindu *banjaras* were attached to the armies, as, there being no regular commissariat arrangements, the provisions to the troops were supplied by these hereditary nomad merchants. A very considerable section among the Hindus was that of the agriculturists. Many must have followed the various professions, such as, teaching, medicine and the like. Brahmans, generally, must have devoted their time to studies and to administering to the religious needs of the people.

The Turkish process of conquest and subjugation of the country, being co-extensive with the period of its rule, lasted for over 350 years, during which lakhs of Hindus were killed, and lakhs were massacred after wars, and lakhs of their women and children were converted and sold as slaves. Timur, for instance, in one day

massacred one lakh of Hindu prisoners on the eve of his battle with Mahmud Tughluq. In no period of our history—not even in early or later British—was there such a wanton destruction of human life as during the 325 years of Turko-Afghan rule. Besides, the Turkish conquests deprived a considerable number of the upper and middle class Hindus of employment in state service, civil and military, which must have brought about a revolution in our society causing hardship to countless families. Politically and socially, the Hindus, as a people, had to suffer deeply during this period. Not only were they deprived of their position as rulers, ministers, governors and commanders of troops, but were also treated contemptuously. The Turkish Sultans and their principal followers sought their brides from well-to-do Hindu families and compelled the proud chiefs to part with their daughters. In accordance with the Muslim law, the Hindu girls were first deprived of their religion, converted to Islam, and then married. All this served as a perpetual humiliation to the proud Hindus who honestly believed, and not merely as a reaction caused by their defeat and degradation, that the newcomers were inferior to them in culture, in religion, in race and, above all, in matters of purity of conduct and morals and ways of life. The political and economic hardships, to which they were subjected by the conquerors, did not inflict upon them so much misery as the humiliating treatment, religious persecution and, above all, invasion on their family honour.

The Hindu society was caste-ridden. The Turkish rule compelled the Hindus to make the caste rules more rigorous than they were in free India. Owing to the Turkish hobby of seeking beautiful Hindu girls for wives, child-marriage became common. Seclusion of women became a general practice in the upper and middle class Hindu families. Widow remarriage was unthinkable in that age except among low caste people. Except in well-to-do families there seems to have been very little of female education. Elementary education for boys was, however, universal. In every village there was a school where reading, writing and arithmetic were taught. Some kind of military training must have also been in vogue. As it was beyond the strength of the Turkish government to disarm the Hindu population, the latter successfully made their own arrangements for the protection and defence of their villages. The Hindus were devoted to their religion. Though the intellectuals among them believed in the unity of God, a majority worshipped images.

People believed in superstition and had great faith in astrology, palmistry, magic and sorcery. Their moral and sexual character was very high. Loans taken were almost invariably repaid. If the debtor failed to pay, his son or grandson considered it his obligation to pay it back with interest. On the whole, the standard of individual honesty and purity of conduct was fairly high.

Of late it has become a fashion with a certain class of our modern writers to endeavour to show that the condition of the Hindus during the Turkish rule was good. One writer[1] has gone to the extent of saying that they were happier under Turkish rule than they had been for a long time under their own indigenous rulers. Doubtful epigraphic evidence has been produced in support of this new-fangled theory. If one or two instances of a Hindu here and there entertaining a favourable opinion about a particular Turkish ruler could be cited, there can be produced a thousand instances of ill-treatment and persecution from the pages of the Muslim historians themselves. Similarly, an attempt has been made to show that State service was open to the Hindus and that some of them were employed on fairly high posts; but when one examines the annals of the period, one fails to see a single Hindu enjoying the post of a governor or a minister or a secretary or even the post of a district officer or the head of a *pargana*. The Hindu *khuts*, *chaudharis* and *muqaddams* were hereditary revenue officers in the local areas without whose co-operation the administration could not be carried on. Inspite of a thorough search, two modern biographers of the liberal minded Muhammad bin Tughluq have not been able to find any other Hindu than one Ratan holding the position of importance during his reign. But the consequence resulting from the appointment of even one Hindu officer would throw lurid light on the narrowness and intolerance of the ruling oligarchy as well as of the Muslim population as a whole rather than establish the liberal character of the administration. Ratan's appointment to Sindh—not as governor, as Dr. Mahdi Husain says, but as a revenue officer—gave a rude shock to the arrogant Muslim population of the province. The notables among them hatched a conspiracy against him and brought about his murder. The first and the last Hindu notable to find a place at the court of Delhi, during the Sultanate period, was one Sidhapala who had come to importance not because the court's policy was to patronise Hindu nobility but because

[1] Dr. I. H. Qureshi; also Dr. Mahdi Husain.

Sidhapala's character was in keeping with that of the Turkish nobility, specially that of the *wazir* who was on the look-out for an ally to bring about the murder of his royal patron. Moreover, the Sultanate was then on its last legs. It was unthinkable for a Hindu occupying even a fourth-rate place at the court under any of the Khalji and Tughluq rulers. The employment of the Hindus in the armies of the Sultans, whether as soldiers or as petty officers, proves nothing, as they were employed as mercenaries, like the troops of other nationalities, as early as the time of Mahmud of Ghazni. If the Hindus were in possession of most of the land it was so because it could not be helped. No medieval government, however powerful, could have succeeded in dispossessing such a large and powerful community as the Hindu of its lands. The confidence of our ancestors is reflected in the medieval proverb: "Land is not a carpet that a foreigner or a Sultan will roll it up and take away on his shoulders." It is a pity that most of the Muslim writers refuse to appreciate the sentiments and sufferings of the indigenous population under the foreign rule. The wearer alone knows where the shoe pinches. Besides unimpeachable contemporary evidence, we have unbroken tradition coming down from hundreds of years that the Turkish rule was oppressive. At the time of a natural calamity the Hindu public used to cry out in agony: "Both God and Turk are after us." One can easily understand these sentiments, for religion and family honour—two of the dearest human possessions—were not safe during the Turkish rule. Years ago the author had several opportunities of hearing the comparison made by our rural people between the Turkish and the British rule. The British rule, according to them, was bad because it exploited the people economically; the Turkish rule was worse as it made unbecoming inroads on the people's religion and honour.

ECONOMIC CONDITION

During the medieval age our country was famous for her fabulous wealth. The story of our enormous riches tempted Mahmud of Ghazni and his plundering hordes to invade the prosperous capital of our kingdoms and sack our temples. One can easily believe from the contemporary accounts of the vast plunder acquired by Muhammad bin Qasim in Sindh and Multan and Mahmud of Ghazni in Hindustan proper—coined and uncoined money, precious stones of various kinds and a variety of other goods valued at crores of rupees —that the stories were not fairy tales and had foundation in fact.

That the early Turkish invaders did not completely drain away our wealth, much less uproot our sources of production, is clear from the enormous booty that the Sultans of Delhi gathered in their expeditions, both in northern and southern India and huge expenses incurred by them on their wars and the money lavished by them on their courts and households. And yet, there was left enough in the land to be carried away by Timur at the end of the 14th century from only one corner of our country, not in thousands but in hundreds of thousands. The economic prosperity of our country, during the Turko-Afghan period, is thus beyond question.

The main source of our wealth was agriculture. The natural fertility of the soil in most parts, copious rainfall and irrigation facilities provided since the early times and their systematical reinforcement by Firoz Tughluq, combined with the industry of our peasants led to the production of so much of corn that it not only supplied the need of the country but was also exported abroad. Rich crops, such as, cotton, sugar-cane, lintels, oilseeds, poppy, Indigo, etc., were produced on a large scale. Fruits of numerous variety were produced in many parts of the country. We have already seen in a previous chapter that a considerable portion of the revenues of Firoz Tughluq came from gardens. But, though agriculture was the occupation of the bulk of the people, there were many important industries in the rural as well as the urban areas. Centuries before the advent of the Turks, our country was industrially well organised. There were guilds and crafts in the villages and in towns which carried on widespread commerce. Inspite of the absence of State support, these industrial institutions survived the shocks of foreign invasions and internal revolutions. There were two kinds of industries—those that were under state patronage and those that were purely private. The Sultans had their own *karkhanas* or workshops in Delhi, which employed many thousands of weavers of silk and other stuffs. Every year thousands of yards of silk and cotton cloth were produced by the royal workshops for preparing robes of honour. There were other kinds of workshops, such as, those for gold and silver articles and embroidery, and so on. As for private industries, the most important among them were the textile industry, including the manufacture of cotton, woollen and silk cloth, dyeing industry, printing industry, calico printing industry, sugar industry, metal work, paper industry, stone and brick work and various other industries, such as inlay of stone work, enamelling etc. There were some minor industries, such

as, shoe-making, manufacture of arms, manufacture of liquors, brass and other metal industries and clay industry. Textile industries were common to all the provinces of the country; but Bangal and Gujarat were particularly renowned for the manufacture and export of textile goods.

Although during the Turko-Afghan period the State did not adopt a comprehensive economic policy with the object of improving the material condition of the people, yet the volume of trade, both internal and external, carried on by our countrymen, was enormous. India had commercial relations with the outside world. She exported agricultural goods, textile manufactures, both cotton and silk, and some other things, such as, tutenag, opium, indigo, etc. Her chief imports were horses, mules and articles of luxury for the royal family and nobility. It is clear that the value of her exports was much greater than that of the imports and the balance of trade was always in her favour. That was why it was generally believed that "Merchants of all countries never ceased to carry pure gold into India, and to bring back in exchange commodities of herbs and gums." We had, during this period, commercial relations with China, the Malay Islands and other countries in the Pacific Ocean which were connected with us by sea-routes. Our trade with Bhutan, Tibet, Afghanistan, Persia and other countries in Central Asia was carried on through land-routes.

But our wealth was unevenly distributed. In fact, it was concentrated in the hands of a small minority. The Sultans and their nobility and the high official class were enormously wealthy and so also were the Hindu rajas and chiefs and top-ranking Hindu merchants and bankers. We have seen that the salaries of important civil and military officers in the Sultanate period were very high. The officials and nobles lived in big mansions, were attended by a large array of servants and rolled in wealth and luxury. The middle class, which consisted of the professional men and important clerks and merchants, was also fairly well-to-do. But the masses, who, of course, formed the bulk of the population, were poor and did not have enough to satisfy their needs. It has been shown in the last chapter that the tiller of the soil was left with about one-third of his produce. The incidence of taxation fell heavily on him; but, it seems, that in normal times he did not starve. His wants were few, in fact, fewer than he has in our day and things of everyday use were much cheaper. But, when there was famine, whether due to failure of rains or some other natural calamity or due to destruction of crops

owing to military expeditions, common people died in hundreds and, sometimes, in thousands. Famines did occur during the period—for example, one in the time of Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khalji when hundreds of people drowned themselves into the Yamuna, and another in the Doab in the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq which, too, was very severe and caused a considerable loss of life.

Owing to the difficult means of communications, prices were not uniform in the various parts of the country. It should not, of course, be expected that they could be uniform throughout the period. In normal times things were very cheap; but, in times of famine and scarcity, prices of goods rose abnormally high. For example, during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq when a famine occurred grain was sold at sixteen to seventeen *jitals* a seer. Similarly, prices would go up during war. When Firoz Tughluq invaded Sindh for the second time, the price of grain there rose to eight to ten *jitals* per seer. During Ala-ud-din's reign the prices of most of the articles of daily use were considered as normal. At that time wheat used to sell at seven and a half *jitals* per maund, barley four *jitals*, rice five *jitals*, pulses five *jitals*, white sugar one hundred *jitals* a maund, soft sugar sixty *jitals* a maund, oil-seeds three *jitals* a maund, mutton ten *jitals* a maund and ghee sixteen *jitals* a maund. The prices of various kinds of cloth were : muslin of Delhi cost seventeen *tankas* a piece, that of Aligarh six *tankas* and a fine blanket cost thirty-six *jitals*, while a coarse one six *jitals*. Prices were exceptionally low during the later years of the reign of Sikandar Lodi and throughout that of Ibrahim Lodi. During Ibrahim's time one could purchase ten maunds of grain, five seers of oil and ten yards of coarse cloth for one *Bahloli*, a coin introduced by Bahlol Lodi and equivalent to one-sixth of a *jital* in value. Nowhere were the things of everyday use cheaper than Bangal which the Turks considered as a "hell crammed with good things."

In short, the general prosperity of the country is testified to by contemporary sources, both Indian and foreign. Among the foreign travellers the names of Marco Polo, who visited southern India between 1288 and 1293, Ibn Battuta, who travelled in most parts of our country between 1334 and 1342, and Mahuan, a Chinese, who visited Bangal in 1406, are of special interest, as all of them have left an account of the country which shows that both industrially and economically India was prosperous and that there was a "great abundance of all the necessaries of life."

LITERATURE

Persian literature

A modern writer[2] has recently advanced a claim on behalf of the Sultanate of Delhi that it was a culture-State. Older historians, on the other hand, cling to the opinion that the period (1206—1526), from literary and cultural points of view, was entirely barren. Both the theories represent extreme views and, therefore, miss the truth. For a government that was theocratic and was based on naked force, whose personnel was almost completely foreign and which borrowed its language, culture and ideology and, even inspiration, from a foreign land and spurned and repressed those of their adopted country and of ninety-five per cent of its population, it cannot but be a tall claim to be looked upon as a culture-State. Culture and religious fanaticism go ill together. On the contrary, it will be unjust to think that the Sultans of Delhi and their nobles were semi-civilised fighters, devoid of interest in literature, poetry and the arts. Though primarily a military people, our Turko-Afghan rulers patronised Islamic learning and arts. There were Persian writers and poets, philosophers and logicians, theologians and lawyers at the court of almost every Sultan from Qutub-ud-din Aibak down to Sikandar Lodi. Some of them had even chronicles. The most important names of the latter category are Hasan Nizami, the author of the *Taj-ul-Maasir*; Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, the author of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*; Zia-ud-din Barani, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* and the *Fatwah-i-Jahandari*; Shams-i-Siraj Afif, the author of *Tarikh-i-Firoz-shahi*; Yahya Bin Ahmad, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*; and Isami (Dakhin), the author of the *Futuh-us-Salatin*. Besides, there were writers of semi-historical works, such as, Amir Khusrav and Ain-ul-mulk Multani. It is unnecessary to recount the names of numerous poets and theologians of the age. The most notable among them were two, namely, Amir Khusrav and Amir Hasan Dihalvi. Amir Khusrav's original name was Muhammad Hasan and he was born at Patiala in 1253 A.D. His father was a Turkish refugee who had taken shelter there a few years before. Amir Khusrav took up service as a court-poet under Prince Muhammad Khan, the eldest son of Balban, and, thereafter, served successive Sultans from Balban to Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq. Later in his life he abandoned the world and became a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya. He was a prolific writer and is said to have written more than four lakhs of

[2] I. H. Qureshi.

couplets. He was, unquestionably, the greatest of the Indian poets writing in Persian. He wrote a number of prose books also. The most well-known of this category are the *Khazain-ul-Futuh*, *Tughluqnama*, and the *Tarikh-i-Alai*. He was the first Muslim writer to make use of Hindi words and to adopt Indian poetic imagery and themes. Unfortunately, his lead was not followed by the later writers who deliberately stuck to foreign vocabulary, poetic imagery and themes. Amir Hasan Dihalvi, whose full name was Najm-ud-din Hasan, was, like Khusrav, a poet of great ability and genius. He migrated to Daultabad where he died in 1338. At the provincial courts, too, there were poets and scholars who produced a crop of literature in Persian. The writers of this period derived their inspiration from Arabia and Persia, blindly imitated foreign writers and abandoned the lead given by the great poet, Amir Khusrav, by following the notorious practice of 'Matruk' which enjoined deliberate weeding out of words of Indian origin from their compositions. Indian themes, Indian poetic imagery and Indian heroes, mountains and rivers were all tabooed. The Sultans, thus, though lovers of literature and art, patronised the culture of a rather limited type. Moreover, all cultural activity was confined to the court and to the nobility; it did not touch the people.

Although the Sultans did not consider it to be their duty to educate the public, they took interest in establishing schools and *madrsahs*, which might be called colleges, for the education of their Muslim subjects. As a rule, an elementary school was attached to every mosque where reading and writing of Persian, besides instructions in the *Quran*, were taught. In the *madrsahs*, which were to be found in important towns, such as, Delhi, Agra, Jalandhar and Firozabad and, at a later stage, at the capitals of independent provincial dynasties, higher literature, poetry, theology, philosophy and some other branches of knowledge were imparted. Libraries were also established at prominent centres of learning, the most important of them being the royal library at Delhi. Amir Khusrav was appointed librarian of this library by Jalal-ud-din Khalji. When, owing to the pressure of the Mongol expansion, learned scholars from Central Asia flocked to Delhi, it became the unrivalled centre of Islamic learning in the East.

Very few Muslims cared to study Sanskrit. After Al-Beruni we do not come across any outstanding Muslim name connected with Sanskrit learning. One or two Sultans, such as Firoz Tughluq and Sikandar Lodi, ordered the translation of a few Sanskrit works into Persian. It is erroneously supposed that it amounted to a patronage

of Sanskrit literature and Sanskrit writers. The works translated were of practical interest. We have no evidence whatever to show that there was any Sanskrit scholar at the court of any of the Sultans of Delhi. Provincial rulers, specially in Bangal, did, however, encourage translation of Sanskrit works.

Sanskrit and Hindi literatures

The Hindu cultural activity was confined to the courts of the Hindu rajas and to our chief centres of learning and pilgrimage. It is natural that during an age of upheaval and insecurity, lacking in royal patronage, no great and immortal literary work that could compare with the masterpieces of Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti and Bana or of Tulsidas and Sur of a later age, could be produced by the Hindus. Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the Hindu mind had become sterile as the result of Turkish conquest. The Hindus did not recognise Turkish superiority in the sphere of cultural and artistic activity. He went on with his own literary enterprise without minding the cramping effect produced on his mind by foreign conquest. The result was an abundant production of religious and philosophic literature, though not of the highest excellence. Ramanuja produced his commentaries on the *Brahmasutra* and Parthasarathi wrote a number of books on *Karma Mimansa*. The most important of these was *Shastra Dipika*. Jayadeva produced his famous *Gita Govinda* in the twelfth century. Several dramas were composed, such as, *Harakeli Nataka, Lalitavigraharaja Nataka, Prasanna Raghava* by Jayadeva in about 1200 A.D., *Hamir Mad-mardana* by Jai Singh Suri during 1219-1229, *Pradyumna-abhyudaya* of Ravi Varman, *Prataprudra Kalyan* of Vidyanath, *Parwati Parinaya* by Vaman Bhatta Bana, *Gangadas Pratap Vilas* by Gangadhar and *Vidagdha Madhava* and *Lalita Madhava* by Rup Goswami. One of the most notable works of Hindu law, named *Mitakshara*, was produced by Vijnanesvara during this period. Another work of law was *Dayabhaga* produced by Jimuta Vahana. The great astronomer, Bhaskaracharya flourished in this age. There were many commentators of *Yoga, Vaisesika* and *Nyaya* systems of our philosophy. Logic was also cultivated. Buddhist and Jain writers produced a number of works on logic. The greatest Jain logician of the period was Deva Suri. There were many religious reformers, and the Bhakti movement was the special product of the age. The court of Vijayanagar patronised Sanskrit learning on a large scale. There lived in that empire many notable scholars. The most important among them was Sayana, the commentator of the

Vedas. While every form of literature in Sanskrit was cultivated during the period, little attention was paid to historical composition and only one treatise that might be called a chronicle was Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* which was written about the middle of twelfth century A.D.

Hindi literature began to come into vogue during this period. Chand Bardai, Prithviraj's court poet, was one of the earliest writers of Hindi. He produced his famous work entitled *Prithviraj Raso*. Another poet was Sarangdhar who wrote two big poems about Hamir of Ranthambhor, called *Hamir Raso* and *Hamir Kavya*. Jagnayaka wrote a long poem, called *Alhakhanda*, which describes in stirring language the exploits of Alha and Udal, the two brave warriors of the Chandel king, Pramardi Deva of Mahoba. Amir Khusrav is considered by some critics as a Hindi poet also. Maithil literature, too, was greatly developed. One of the greatest writers of this language was Vidyapati Thakur who flourished towards the end of the fourteenth century and wrote works in Sanskrit, Hindi and Maithil. Many Bangali scholars produced a crop of literature. Raghunandan Misra's work on *Smriti* is too well-known to be mentioned in detail. Mirabai composed poems in Rajasthani. Several Marathi poets, notable among whom was Namadeva, flourished during the age. Guru Nanak produced verses in Panjabi. The bhakti movement became responsible for the growth and expansion of our modern Indian languages.

Urdu language

A common language that gradually began to emerge as a consequence of contact between the foreign Turks and other Central Asian peoples on the one hand and the Hindus on the other had its birth during this period. This was originally called *Zaban-i-Hindavi* and subsequently Urdu. It was a dialect of the western Hindi spoken for centuries in the neighbourhood of Delhi and Meerut. The grammatical structure of this language is Indian; but gradually it began to have a preponderating vocabulary of Persian and Arabic words. Amir Khusrav is considered to have been the first Muslim writer who used this language as a vehicle for the expression of his poetic ideas. It was not patronised by the Turkish rulers during this age, as they favoured Persian and not this hybrid, though indigenous, product.

THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT

According to ancient Hindu thought salvation or freedom from the bondage of birth and death, which is the ultimate end of human life, can be attained by three means, namely, *gyana* (knowledge),

karma (action) and *bhakti* (devotion). During the period of the Sultanate of Delhi a series of Hindu religious thinkers and reformers set on foot a movement for religious reform which emphasised the last, namely devotion, which became known as the Bhakti movement. It will, thus, be seen that the movement was not altogether new and it did not owe its origin to Islam as has been erroneously supposed by some modern writers. What really happened was that this movement received impetus from the presence of iconoclastic Muslim preachers who vehemently criticised the Hindu religion and thought. The history of the movement goes back to the time of the great reformer, Shankaracharya, who successfully combated Buddhism and gave Hinduism a common solid philosophical background. He established a logical monistic system and laid emphasis on the first of the three methods of attaining salvation, namely, knowledge. But this failed to evoke a hearty response from the common people. Anxious to attract the popular mind towards Hinduism and make it a living and active force in the life of the common people, our religious thinkers of the medieval age laid stress on the third means, namely, *bhakti* (devotion). As a vast majority of the Hindus could not pursue careers of material, political and cultural advancement under the alien rule, a dominant feature of the bhakti movement was 'escapism'. The people as well as the leaders of the movement sought solace in other-worldliness.

The earliest exponent of this school of religious thought was a great *Vaishnava* teacher, Ramanuja, who flourished in the early years of the twelfth century. He did his best to popularise the cult of devotion to a personal God and preached that salvation can be had by this means alone. The next reformer was Ramananda, a follower of the Ramanuja school, who was born in a Kanyakubja family of Allahabad. A worshipper of Rama, he preached the doctrine of *bhakti* to people of all castes and to both the sexes. He had twelve principal disciples, one of whom was a barber (Saindasa), another a cobbler (Raidasa) and the third a Muhammadan weaver (Kabir). The third teacher of the school was Vallabhacharya who was a worshipper of Krishna and, therefore, an exponent of the Krishna cult. He was born near Banaras in 1479 and his parents were Telugu Brahmans who had come to northern India for pilgrimage and settled here. He was a man of remarkable literary talent even in his early life. After completing his education at Kashi, he went to the court of Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar where

he won a victory over some scholarly followers of *Shaivism*. He preached monism of the pure type, known, technically, as *shuddhadwaita* or pure non-duality. He became very popular with the common people; but, later on, abuses appeared among his followers who were mostly well-to-do people and, eventually, it became 'the Epicureanism of the East'.

The greatest saint of the bhakti movement was Chaitanya who was born in a learned Brahman family of Nadia in Bangal in 1485. From his early life he showed literary ability of a high order. At the age of twenty-four he renounced the world, became a *sadhu* and spent the rest of his life in preaching his message of love and devotion. He travelled over most parts of the country, both in the north and in the south, and spent a considerable time at Vrindaban. The essence of his teaching has been summed up thus : "If a creature adores Krishna and serves his *guru*, he is released from the meshes of illusion and attains to Krishna's feet..." This leads him to rise above the fetters of this world. "He believed that through love and devotion, song and dance, a state of ecstasy could be produced in which the personal presence of God would be realised." Chaitanya was opposed to the domination of the priests and to outward forms and ceremonies of religion. He preached to all irrespective of caste and creed. His influence was so profound and lasting that he is considered by his followers as an incarnation of Vishnu. He died in 1533.

Another preacher of the bhakti movement was Namadeva. He was a Maharashtrian and his followers belonged to all castes and classes, including a few Muslim converts to Hinduism. He belonged to the caste of tailors and flourished in the first half of the fifteenth century. Like other reformers of the age, he had faith in the unity of God and was against image-worship and priestly ritualism. He believed that one could attain salvation only through love of God.

Of the notable exponents of the bhakti cult, two, namely, Kabir and Nanak, stood definitely for a compromise between Hinduism and Islam. Kabir's early life is shrouded in mystery. He is said to have been born of a Brahman widow of Banaras who left him near a tank from where he was picked up by a Muhammadan weaver. Scholars differ about his date of birth. It seems almost certain that he flourished towards the close of the fifteenth century. From his early life he was a boy of meditative turn of mind and thoroughly religious, though in an unconventional sense. He is said to have become a disciple of Ramananda. Kabir might have been only

nominally a Muslim, for his poems are, beyond the shadow of doubt, saturated with the Hindu religious and philosophical thought of a high order. He was also influenced by the *sufi* thought and practices. Kabir led the life of a householder and performed the daily duties of his life, and yet he was a *bhakta* of eminence. He preached the religion of love to all people irrespective of caste and creed and made it the main concern of his life to promote unity between Hinduism and Islam. Like other reformers of the bhakti cult, he was against caste and ritual and the external formalities of religion. He was a firm believer in the theory that salvation could be attained only through love and devotion to God. So he believed in *bhajana* and condemned all kinds of sham, insincerity and hypocrisy. The following poem of Kabir admirably sums up his teachings :

If God be within the mosque, then to whom does this world belong ?
If Rama be within the image, then who is there to know what happens without ?
Hari is in the east; Allah is in the west. Look within your own heart, for there you will find both Karim and Rama.
All the men and women of the world are His living forms.
Kabir is the child of Allah and Rama; He is my guru; He is my pir.
Vain, too, are the distinctions of caste.
All shades of colour are but broken arcs of light.
All varieties in human nature are but fragments of humanity.
The right to approach God is not the monopoly of Brahmans, but belong to all who are sincere of heart.

Guru Nanak, like Kabir, preached harmony between Hinduism and Islam. He was born of Khatri parents in 1469 at the village of Talwandi (modern Nankana), thirty-five miles to the south-west of Lahore and situated in the Shaikhupura district of the West Panjab. His father was a *patwari*. Nanak was given formal education and employed as an assistant to his brother-in-law, Jai Rama of Sultanpur Lodi, who was a grain merchant in the service of Daulat Khan Lodi. But his accounts fell into disorder, and he left service. At Sultanpur Lodi began his religious career and his first notable saying to attract attention was : "There is no Hindu and no Musalman." He spent the rest of his life in preaching and wandering over the country and even beyond as far as Mecca and Madina. He died in 1538 at Kartarpur in the Jalandhar Doab. Nanak had married, lived the life of a householder and had two sons. He believed that married life was not a bar to spiritual progress. He preached the gospel of universal toleration and was against external formalities of Hinduism

and against caste and religious fanaticism. His message was one of unity of God and personal love for him. He had both Hindu and Muslim disciples. He nominated Angada, one of his disciples, as his successor who gave unity and organisation to his followers. Gradually they became known as the Sikhs.

The bhakti cult was a widespread movement and embraced the whole of the country. It was a movement of the people and aroused intense interest among them. Perhaps, after the decline of Buddhism, there had never been a more widespread and popular movement in our country than the bhakti movement. It had two main objects in view. One was to reform the Hindu religion so as to enable it to withstand the onslaught of Islamic propaganda and proselytism. Its second object was to bring about reconciliation between Hinduism and Islam and to foster friendly relations between the two communities. It succeeded in realising the first object by bringing about the simplification of worship and liberalisation of the traditional caste rules. The high and the low among the Hindu public forgot many of their prejudices and believed in the message of the reformers that all people were equal in the eyes of God and that birth was no bar to religious salvation. The movement failed in achieving its second object, namely, Hindu-Muslim unity. Neither the Turko-Afghan rulers nor the Muslim public accepted the Rama-Sita creed. They refused to believe that Rama and Rahim, Ishwara and Allah were the names of the same God. The movement, however, incidentally became responsible for another solid achievement, namely, the evolution and enrichment of our vernacular literatures. The reformers preached to the masses through their mother-tongue and, therefore, gradually enriched our modern languages, such as, Hindi, Bangali, Marathi, Maithil, etc. The period of bhakti movement, therefore, proved to be a golden period in the history of the growth of our vernacular literatures.

THE FINE ARTS

We have little evidence about the cultivation of art, other than architecture, during the Sultanate period. One, however, comes across stray and infrequent references to ornamental designs painted on walls or engraved on furniture, arms and saddles and embroidered on flags and costumes. Besides, ornamental pottery and metal work were well developed. Inlaid metal basins, porcelains and bidri vessels and profusely decorated brass and silver pots were used in the royal household and also in the houses of the nobles and high officials.

But, owing to the Quranic prohibition, the art of painting proper was shunned by the Sultans and the Muslim nobility. Nonetheless, the art of calligraphy was widely practised. Music, though disliked by orthodox Muslims for religious reasons, had such irresistible appeal that it could not altogether be banished. There were, therefore, some musicians of note during the period among whom the great poet, Amir Khusrav, occupies the first place. He set some of his poems to the Indian tunes and is even reputed to have invented new *ragas*.

Architecture

The Sultans were great lovers of architecture. By the time of the Turkish conquest of our country the various races of Central Asia had developed a style of architecture which was the result of the fusion of indigenous styles of architecture with those of Trans-Oxiana, Iran, Afghanistan, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Northern Africa and the countries of the south-western Europe on the one hand and Muslim Arabia on the other. The architecture brought by our Turkish conquerors to India in the last decade of the twelfth century was, thus, not exclusively Muslim or even Arabian. The distinctive features of this imported architecture were : (1) the dome, (2) lofty towers or minarets, (3) the arch, and (4) the vault. When the Turks came to our country they found a highly developed indigenous style in the land. Nevertheless, being conquerors, they naturally introduced in the country their own ideas and forms and also the method of construction of buildings; but they did not succeed in erecting buildings that could be exact copies of their prototype in Central Asia. Their buildings were greatly influenced by indigenous art traditions, and, hence, the new architecture that emerged was neither completely foreign nor purely Indian. The amalgamation of the foreign and the indigenous architectural styles was made possible by certain factors. Firstly, our foreign rulers had to employ Indian craftsmen and sculptors who had their own clear ideas about the form and method of construction and, therefore, unconsciously introduced into Muslim buildings many decorative and architectural details which had been in vogue in this country for centuries in the past. Secondly, the early conquerors almost invariably built their mosques, palaces and even tombs out of the materials of Hindu and Jain temples which they had callously destroyed. This, without doubt, modified in execution the foreign models which they might have had in view. Thirdly, notwithstanding, the striking contrasts

between the Muslim and Hindu styles, their buildings resemble in some particulars and, therefore, the Turkish Sultans sometimes converted the Hindu and Jain temples into mosques by demolishing their flat roofs and providing domes and minarets in their place. In the words of Sir John Marshall, one feature common to Hindu temples and Muslim mosques was "the open court encompassed by chambers or colonnades, and such temples as were built on this plan naturally lent themselves to conversion into mosques and would be the first to be adapted for that purpose by the conquerors. Again, a fundamental characteristic that supplied a common link between the styles was the fact that both Islamic and Hindu arts were inherently decorative. Ornament was as vital to the one as to the other; both were dependent on it for their very being."

The first architectural construction erected by Qutub-ud-din Aibak was the well-known Quwat-ul-Islam mosque at Delhi which was begun in 1195 and finished in 1199. It was built on the plinth of a Hindu temple and out of the materials of twenty-seven Hindu and Jain shrines. Most of the columns, shafts and capitals of this mosque were originally parts of Hindu temples and were hurriedly adapted to the needs of a Muslim mosque. The images and carvings on the columns, shafts and capitals were either defaced or concealed by being turned upside down. The only Islamic features of this building are the presence of a screen in front, with Muslim designs and ornaments, and a calligraphic reproduction of the Quranic text. The next Turkish building erected at Ajmer is also a mosque. It is known as Dhai Din ka Jhonpra. This too was built by Qutub-ud-din Aibak. The building was originally a Sanskrit college and temple built by the great emperor Vigraharaja Visaldeva. The upper parts of it were demolished and domes and arches were erected. Even a casual visitor can notice countless human figures on the pillars, and even on the graves inside, with defaced faces and hands and feet. The third important Turkish architecture is the Qutub Minar which was planned by Aibak a little before 1199 and completed by Iltutmish. It was originally intended to serve as a place for the *muazzin* to call the 'faithful' to prayer, but later on became famous as a tower of victory. This building is essentially Islamic in form and design. Iltutmish, besides completing the Qutub Minar, added some buildings of his own, the most prominent among them being a tomb built on the grave of his eldest son, known as Sultan Ghari. Unlike the Qutub Minar, this building, being the first tomb erected

by the Turks, is more Hindu in architectural details and decorative *motif* than any other tomb in existence. From the time of Iltutmish the buildings of the Sultanate began to show a marked increase in Islamic elements. That monarch extended the Quwat-ul-Islam mosque and put up a screen in the building. He made some additions to the Dhai Din ka Jhonpara also. Balban built his palace, known as the Red Palace. His tomb at Delhi is purely Muslim in execution. The arch in the entrance of the tomb is the best so far erected by the Turks in the country. The Khalji monarch, Ala-ud-din, was a great builder and erected many buildings. Two of his buildings are notable. They are a mosque called Jamait Khan Masjid at the shrine of Nizam-ud-din Auliya and the famous Alai Darwaza at the Qutub Minar. Both these show a preponderance of Muslim architectural ideas. The buildings of the Tughluq period do not possess that splendour which characterised those of the so-called Slave and the Khalji dynasties. They are simple, formal, prosaic and even austere. The change seems to be due to two reasons. The Tughluq Sultans were hard pressed for money and could not afford to spend huge sums on buildings. Moreover, they were puritanical in their taste and people of religious outlook. Their buildings are characterised by sloping walls and by heavy and dark appearance. The important specimens of the Tughluq architecture are the tomb of Tughluq Shah, the city of Tughluqabad and Kotla Firoz Shah. The Sayyids and the Lodis tried to revive the splendour and the grace of the Khalji period, but they attained only qualified success. In the opinion of a competent critic, they could not "shake off the deadening effect of the Tughluq period." The best of the Pathan buildings is the Moth ki Masjid built by the prime minister of Sikandar Lodi. According to critics, this is the finest specimen of the architecture of the Lodis.

Provincial architectures

The rulers of the various provincial dynasties that came into existence on the decline of the Sultanate under the later Tughluqs were also builders of palaces, mosques and tombs. Though in essential features the various provincial styles resemble that of Delhi, they differ from it, and among themselves, in some important details. The Delhi architecture, for example, was more remarkably splendid than that of many a provincial kingdom, the rulers of which could not afford to spend as much money as the Sultans of Delhi. Moreover, the provincial styles of architecture were modified by the local

art traditions of pre-Turkish period that still held the field and also by the peculiar conditions that obtained in various provinces.

Multan. This province, having been for centuries under continuous Muslim rule, possesses several monuments of note. The earliest buildings were two mosques, the first of which was built by Muhammad bin Qasim and the second was erected on the site of the famous temple of Aditya which was demolished by the Karmathians. There are three important shrines in Multan, namely, the shrine of Shah Yusuf-ul-Gardizi (built about 1152), the mausoleum of Bahaul Haqq (built in 1262), and the tomb of Shams-ud-din, popularly known as Shams-i-Tabrizi (built after 1276). There is a fourth shrine, namely, the tomb of Rukn-i-Alam, built by Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq (between 1320 and 1324). The above three buildings have suffered greatly from the ravages of time and had to be reconstructed. The last shrine is considered as "one of the most splendid memorials ever erected in the honour of the dead." The building is largely Persian in design.

Bangal. Although Bangal was so rich and her artists possessed of an inborn sense of art and adaptability of character, the local Sultans did not succeed in developing a first-rate style of architecture. Their buildings were largely made of bricks and stone was very sparingly used. The architecture was characterised by "the use of pointed arches on short pillars and the Muslim's adaptation of the traditional Hindu temple style of curvilinear cornices copied from the bamboo structures, and of beautifully carved Hindu symbolic decorative designs like the lotus." The ruins of these buildings are found at Gaur or Lakhanauti, Tribeni and Pandua. The earliest specimens of the Bangal style of architecture are the tomb and mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi, which were built mostly out of the materials from the Hindu temples. The well-known Adina Masjid was built by Sikandar Shah at Pandua in the second half of the fourteenth century. It was a very huge and ambitious structure, and, though considered in Bangal as one of the wonders of the world, its design, in the opinion of Sir John Marshall, is "far from being worthy of its size." Another beautiful building is the tomb of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Shah, which is considered to be one of the finest tombs in Bangal. The Dakhil Darwaza at Gaur is "as perfect an example of brick structure as can be found anywhere in the world." The other well-known structures are the Lotan Masjid, the Bara Sona Masjid, the Chhota Sona Masjid and the Qadam Rasul mosque. Of

these the Bara Sona Masjid "has the merit of greater simplicity and impressiveness." The Bangal style is a class by itself and is inferior to most of the other provincial styles in design, execution, finish and decoration.

Gujarat. The Gujarat style was probably the finest and the most beautiful among the provincial architectures. Before the advent of the Turks the province had already a beautiful indigenous style. The Turkish conquerors utilised the local talent and erected beautiful buildings which were characterised by the use of fine wood carving, delicate stone lattice work and profuse ornamentation. The capital city of Ahmadabad, founded by Ahmad Shah, was enriched by a number of lofty buildings which were built largely out of the materials of the old temples and buildings. One of the best examples of the Gujarat style is the well-known Jami Masjid at Ahmadabad erected by Ahmad Shah in 1411. It has fifteen domes which are supported on two hundred pillars. Another equally beautiful building is the tomb of Ahmad Shah. The city of Champaner, also, contains remarkable buildings, including a grand mosque built by Mahmud Begarha and the palaces in the fort. Dr. Burgess lavishes praise on the Gujarat style and says that it combines "all the beauty and finish of the native art with a certain magnificence which is deficient in their own works."

Malwa. The province of Malwa also evolved a distinctive style of its own. There are two remarkable mosques at Dhar, the ancient capital of the kingdom. One of these was originally a Sanskrit college attached to which was a Hindu temple. It is even now known as Bhojashala. It was converted into a mosque. The other mosque also is built out of the materials of old Hindu buildings. Both the mosques betray great Hindu influence. Its pillars and tombs are Hindu in form; but the buildings of Mandu, which was established as a capital by the local Sultans, are peculiarly Muslim in design and execution and bear a close resemblance to those of Delhi. The most notable buildings of Mandu, which is fortified by strong stone walls, are the Jami Masjid, the Hindola Mahal, the Jahaz Mahal, Husang Shah's tomb and the palaces of Baz Bahadur and Rupmati. The Jami Masjid was planned and begun by Husang Shah, but it was completed by Mahmud Khalji. The Darbar Hall, which is popularly known as Hindola Mahal, was also, probably, erected by Husang Shah. Husang Shah's is the first great tomb in the country built wholly of white marble. The Jahaz Mahal, with

its arched walls, roofed pavilions and beautiful reservoirs, is one of the most conspicuous buildings in Mandu. The palaces of Baz Bahadur and Rupmati are built high up on the plateau overlooking the Narmada. In short, Mandu "is, of all the fortress cities of India, the most magnificent."

Jaunpur. The Sharqi dynasty of Jaunpur was responsible for great patronage of architecture. The buildings erected by the Sultans are characterised by a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim architectural ideas. The buildings of this style are noted for their "massive sloping walls, square pillars, small galleries and cloisters." The mosques of Jaunpur, which were built out of the materials of the demolished Hindu temples, have no minarets of the usual Muslim type. One of the brilliant specimens of the Sharqi style is the Atala Devi Masjid which was begun in 1377 and completed in 1408. The next is the Jami Masjid which was built by Husain Shah (1452-78). The third is the Lal Darwaza mosque. The other notable buildings are the broken facade of the Jhanjheeri and the Khalis Mukhlis.

Kashmir. In the remote valley of Kashmir the local Sultans adopted the old Hindu tradition of stone and wooden architecture. They supplemented it with structural forms and decorative *motifs* peculiarly associated with Islam. The result was that in Kashmir, as elsewhere, there was a harmonious blending of the Hindu and Muslim architectural ideas. Some of the important buildings there belong to the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470). The tomb of Mandani, with the adjacent mosque in Srinagar, is considered to be a beautiful specimen of Kashmir art. The Jami Masjid at Srinagar built by Sikandar, the *Butshikan*, and extended by Zain-ul-Abidin "is still an instructive example of the pre-Mughal style." Another building is the mosque of Shah Hamadan in Srinagar which is built exclusively of timber.

Dakhin. The Bahamani Sultans of the Dakhin were patrons of art. They brought into existence a peculiar style of architecture which was a mixture of a number of elements, such as, Indian, Turkish, Egyptian and Persian. The mosques at Gulbarga and Bidar are beautiful specimens of this art; but the most remarkable Dakhin architecture is found at Bijapur. The magnificent mausoleum of Muhammad Adil Shah, popularly known as Gol Gumbaz, is built after a peculiar style in which the Turkish art ideas have a preponderating influence. There are other equally celebrated buildings, such as, the Jami Masjid at Gulbarga, the Chand Minar at Daultabad

and the college of Mahmud Gawan at Bidar. Most of the buildings of the Bahamani Sultans were built on the site, and out of the materials of demolished Hindu temples and, therefore, it was impossible to avoid Hindu influence. According to Sir John Marshall, in the early stages of the evolution of the Bahamanide art the native Dakhin had to struggle hard for its existence; but from about the end of the 15th century it began to reassert itself. The Indian genius, thus, ultimately rose superior to foreign influence.

Hindu architecture

As has been said, the Hindus had developed architecture to perfection before the advent of the Turks. The distinctive features of the Hindu architecture are : (1) narrow columns, (2) pilasters, (3) corbel brackets, (4) tapering arch built on the cantilever principle, and (5) ornamental designs. Hindu buildings were generally mysterious and were not broad and open. Our rulers were fond of temples and Sanskrit colleges. They did not seem to have bestowed much attention on their palaces. The medieval specimens of Hindu architecture in northern India are to be found in Rajasthan, particularly in Mewar. Most of the rulers of Mewar were patrons of art and architecture. Rana Kumbha erected numerous forts and other buildings. The most beautiful and well-known among them are the fort of Kumbhalgarh and the Kirti Stambha or Jaya Stambha (pillar of victory). This pillar is one of the most remarkable towers in the country. It is built partly of red sand-stone and partly of white marble and is enriched by numerous images of Hindu gods and goddesses with inscriptions engraved at the bottom of each. There is another pillar at Chittor, known as Jai Stambha, which is embellished with beautiful carving and lattice work. At Amber, near Jaipur, there are ruins of old buildings belonging to this period and, so also, in several other States of Rajasthan. The rulers of the Vijayanagar empire were celebrated for their patronage of art. They built council chambers, palaces, public offices, temples and aqueducts, which were considered to be work of great beauty and excited the admiration of foreign travellers. According to Fergusson, the *Vitthala* temple of Krishnadeva Raya is "the finest building of its kind in southern India."

The Hindu architecture of this period seems to have remained uninfluenced by Islamic ideas. It was not until after the advent of the Mughuls that our architects and artists came under the influence of Islamic art.

17

THE SULTANATE IN RETROSPECT

Rapid over-running of Hindustan

When one looks back on the history of the conquest of our country by the Turks, one is struck by the fact that most parts of northern India were so easily over-run by the foreign hordes. It is amazing to read that Mahmud of Ghazni would repeat his annual raids, penetrate into the heart of our country, plunder our prosperous cities and wealthy temples and return to Ghazni without being effectively punished, much less checked. One would hardly believe that our political and military condition was so rotten that the invader could not be decisively beaten even once and prevented from repeating his audacious raids. Nevertheless, this is a fact of history that Mahmud was never really decisively defeated by any Hindu ruler. On the other hand, it is equally true that the Indian soldier was not in any way inferior to the Turk. In fact, in courage, in sheer bravery and disregard and contempt of death, he was superior to his Turkish adversary. Nor were our Rajput rulers, in any sense of the term, cowards or lacking in soldierly qualities. What could, then, be the cause of our country having been over-run so easily from the Indus to Banaras within a short space of thirty years by the Ghaznavide hordes ? The first and foremost cause seems to be the fact that the country having been parcelled out into numerous independent States, it was nobody's concern to make effective arrangements for the protection of the north-western frontier and to check the progress of the invader. While the Hindushahi king of the Panjab fought to resist Mahmud within his own territory, he did not think it to be his business to prevent his march into the dominions of his neighbours. The same was the attitude of the king of Kanauj and the vicious circle went on. An effective combination of all, or most of our rulers, was an impossibility in that age, for they were not on good terms with one another. Secondly, the masses had developed an attitude of unconcern towards politics, the rise and fall of empires and coming and going of rulers. They did not care as to who their rulers were.

They went on tilling their fields without minding the great conflicts between our rulers and the invader. Political apathy, combined with lack of patriotism, territorial or emotional, created a frame of mind in the generality of the Indians of that age which made little difference between foreigners and their countrymen. But the greatest cause of our country having been over-run so easily and quickly was the employment of shock tactics by Mahmud. He pursued the policy of falling upon our prosperous towns with lightning rapidity and withdrawing himself suddenly and returning to Ghazni with equal speed. His mobile and rapid marches, sudden attacks and equally sudden withdrawals and the repetition of these tactics times out of number created great confusion and demoralisation in our ranks. Our people looked helpless like the peaceful, though brave, members of a household before a daring and callous robber. Before they could gather themselves and make improvised arrangements for protection, the invader, like a robber, was off. They felt that they were now safe; but the invader returned again with his former suddenness and swooped down upon another prosperous town and its wealthy temples and the game went on causing helplessness and alarm. In these circumstances the only thing that could save the situation was a rigid military and political organisation that could make it possible for our troops to remain eternally vigilant; but this pre-supposed one single leader of eminence for the whole country, or, at least, for the whole of northern India, was an impossibility in that age.

As the student proceeds further, he meets with another surprising phenomenon. And that is how soon our people and rulers forgot their suffering and humiliation at the hands of Mahmud, and, after he was dead and gone, they relapsed into their old lethargy. They derived no lesson from the history of his invasions and lost the opportunity of organising themselves for mutual defence and protection. The last quarter of the twelfth century found them as unprepared and disorganised as they had been in the early years of the eleventh century. When Muhammad of Ghur started on his career of conquest of northern India, he met with little resistance and, during the brief period of fifteen years, the Turks once again overran the entire Hindustan—this time as far as the eastern extremity of Bangal. The same causes were at work at the end of the twelfth century as they had been in the beginning of the eleventh century A.D.

Our bid for freedom

Over-running the country was one thing and its effective conquest quite another. It did not mean that the Turks succeeded in capturing easily what they had over-run. The real and effective resistance of our people began only when the Turks attempted to occupy the country and rule over it. Perhaps our people laboured under the mistaken notion that the invader was not concerned with territorial sovereignty and would content himself with mere plunder. But when they saw that his lieutenants were establishing military garrisons and occupying the country, they adopted concerted measures to oppose. The struggle between the Hindushahi kings of the Panjab and their Arab and Turkish neighbours is the story of a remarkable resistance which was put up for centuries. The province of the Panjab could be conquered by the invaders only after over 350 years' (636—1026 A.D.) effort. The Chauhans of Sambhar and Ajmer revolted four times within the brief period of half a decade in order to drive away Muhammad of Ghur's officers. The fort of Ranthambhor could not remain in effective Muslim possession even after 150 years' fighting. The entire Rajasthan could not really be conquered and occupied during this period. One reads in the pages of the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* that annual expeditions had to be undertaken to the fertile regions of the Ganga and Yamuna Doab by the Sultans, from Qutub-ud-din Aibak down to Balban, and yet it could not be thoroughly subdued. The process of annual conquest of this region, as of several others, had to be repeated throughout the Sultanate period, and the revenue of the Doab could not be collected except at the point of the bayonet. In fact, the Hindus continued their struggle against their Turko-Afghan rulers throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi. When one compares the fate of other Asian and European countries, which so tamely submitted to the Arab and Turkish aggression, one cannot but have admiration for our ancestors who fought for long and fought hard against the enemy who had so quickly established his supremacy, political, military and religious, over many countries of the three continents of the world.

Why were foreign pockets allowed to exist on our soil ?

Another surprise that awaits the curious student when he surveys the history of the age is as to why our ancestors did not make a concerted effort to drive the conquerors from the pockets which they had conquered and occupied. At any rate, why were they suffered to

establish their rule in Sindh, Multan and the Panjab ? After their victory over Dahir, the Arabs permanently occupied Sindh and Multan. Mahmud of Ghazni captured the Panjab in the early years of the eleventh century. The rest of India, still being in powerful Hindu hands, should have made a united attempt to expel the Arabs from Multan and Sindh in the eighth century A.D. and the Turks from the Panjab in the eleventh century. The answer is that there was the same old problem as to how to bring about unity among the warring Hindu chiefs. Their bravery and local patriotism were out of the question. Many dozens of contemporary inscriptions in Sanskrit have come down to us describing that the ruler of this State or that defeated *malekshas* and occupied this town or that which had been in their possession. The Chauhans, the Gujara Prathiharas, the Guhilots the Baghelas and several other Rajput ruling families were credited with unusual valour and success in their wars against the Arabs in Multan and Sindh and the Ghaznavides in the Panjab. Individually, they could fight all right; but a collective and united attempt was never made. Secondly, the spirit of aggression and offence seems to have been absent in our rulers and people for ages in the past. Hardly did any king of India even think of waging an aggressive war against any foreign country or foreign people. Thirdly, the Arabs in Multan and Sindh and the Ghaznavides in the Panjab followed the cunning policy of treating the Hindus in their respective States as hostages. Whenever a neighbouring Hindu chief invaded any of these foreign States on Indian soil, the Arab or the Turkish ruler threatened the local Hindus with death and declared that he would demolish the principal temples and break their images to pieces. The contemporary Arab travellers and historians have described in detail this cunning device resorted to by the local Muslim rulers to save themselves from destruction. Al-Idrisi writes in his *Nuzhatul Mushtaq* : "The people make it (the image of the Sun Temple at Multan) the object of a pious pilgrimage, and to obey it is the law. So far is this carried that, when neighbouring princes make war against the country of Multan, either for the purpose of plunder or for carrying off the Idol, the priests have only to meet, threaten the aggressors with its anger and predict their destruction, and the assailants at once renounce their designs. *Without this fear the town of Multan would be destroyed.*" (*Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. I, page 82). Another Arab historian, Al-Masudi, writes in his *Muruj-ul-Zabab*,

composed about 941 A.D. : "When the unbelievers march against Multan and the faithfuls do not feel themselves strong enough to oppose them, they threaten to break their Idol, and their enemies immediately withdraw." (*Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. I, page 23). Our superstitious ancestors, who were far stronger than the later Arabs and Ghaznavides, were thus duped and did not undertake the conquest of Multan or Sindh or the Panjab.

Causes of frequent dynastic changes

When a comparison is made between the Sultanate of Delhi and the Mughul empire that succeeded it, one notices that, while during the latter age one single dynasty ruled over the country for more than 250 years, the former age was characterised by the rise and fall of many ruling dynasties. There were many causes of the frequent dynastic changes between 1206 and 1526. In the first place, there was no fixed or universally recognised law of succession among our Turko-Afghan rulers. According to Islamic theory of sovereignty, any Muslim, irrespective of his birth and position in life, is qualified to be king, provided he is fit and powerful. In view of this theory, ambitious men, whether they were related to the ruling family or not, aspired for the throne. Powerful and ambitious provincial governors during the Sultanate made a successful bid to reach the throne. Iltutmish, Jalal-ud-din Khalji, Ala-ud-din Khalji, Ghiyas-us-din Tughluq and Bahlol Lodi, who became rulers of Delhi, were provincial governors and, with the exception of one, namely, Ala-ud-din, none of these was a member of the ruling family which he supplanted. Many a rebellion was also due to the above cause, for the throne was not considered to be beyond the reach of one who could wield the sword successfully. Secondly, the government was weak. It was based upon personal rule, as opposed to the 'Rule of Law'. The strength of the Government, therefore, depended upon the personality and character of the ruling monarch. There was no guarantee that a capable ruler would be followed by an equally competent successor. As a rule, powerful rulers had weak successors, as the latter were brought up in the luxury of the *harem* which was full of vice. The Turks were foreigners and had to face perpetual opposition from our people who had not given up their attempt to regain their freedom. In these circumstances, the Sultanate could not afford to have a weak ruler on the throne. Hence, the nobles generally preferred an able soldier, whether he belonged to the

ruling family or not. Thirdly, the slave system, which had once produced great leaders, like Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish and Balban, degenerated rapidly in our country. The number of slaves rose to thousands. It was not possible to give them all efficient education and training in the art of administration and war; but, as they were slaves of the rulers, they always got enough wealth and leisure and received preferential treatment, with the result that they became a lazy and pampered class. The system, thus, became tainted with corruption and ceased to produce able men. Moreover, a few able slaves, like Malik Kafur and Malik Khusrav, that the age produced, did not possess the loyalty of their predecessors. They acted against the interests of their patron's family. Malik Kafur conspired against the life of his master, Ala-ud-din Khalji, and was suspected to have poisoned him. He was responsible for the blinding of the royal princes and, had he not been put to death in time, he would not have left alive any male member of Ala-ud-din's house. Malik Khusrav actually murdered his royal master, Qutub-ud-din Mubarak, and seized the throne for himself. The degenerated slave system thus became a potent cause of frequent dynastic changes in that age. Fourthly, many of the Sultans of Delhi did not possess a powerful standing army. Ala-ud-din Khalji had wisely laid the foundation of this necessary institution; but his successors allowed it to relapse and, like the previous rulers, depended upon the support of the contingent furnished by the provincial governors. The powerful military governors, thus, acquired a position of king-makers. In fact, military governorship became a stepping stone to the throne. A weak king with no powerful standing army at his back was at the mercy of his powerful barons. This is another reason why so many provincial governors reached the throne of Delhi. Fifthly, Hindu chiefs, who had been deprived of their freedom and country, naturally, continued to entertain the ambition of getting rid of the foreign yoke. The contemporary Persian chroniclers tell us that the Rajputs of Ajmer and Sambhar and those of Gujarat revolted again and again against Qutub-ud-din Aibak. In the time of Iltutmish a powerful Hindu reaction occurred and lasted for many years. Balban was faced with the problem of saving the infant state from the depredations of the people and their leaders, the Rajput chiefs. Ala-ud-din Khalji tried to repress them, but, when his eyes were closed in death, our people again raised their heads. The Sultans were obliged to

fight almost perpetually against the Hindu patriots. In view of this, they had to keep their armies in proper trim and to have on the throne of Delhi a tried soldier who could cope with the Hindu reaction. Weaklings were, therefore, ruthlessly set aside. Sixthly, the ever-recurring Mongol raids, which began after the death of Raziah in 1240, exercised great effect upon the policy and fortunes of the Sultanate. The Mongols had massed themselves on our north-western frontier since the time of Iltutmish. They made frequent raids into the interior of the Panjab and Multan. After Balban's death they made raids into the heart of Hindustan and besieged Delhi more than once. The Sultans were, therefore, obliged to give the first priority to the work of defence and fortification of the frontier. As has been shown in a previous chapter, the threat of Mongol invasions diverted the attention of so able a monarch as Balban from the much-needed conquests in the interior and even urgent suppression of rebellions. Further, the Mongol raids encouraged the forces of discontent. Whenever their invasion took place, the disaffected Hindu chiefs and rebellious *maliks* and *amirs* almost invariably raised their heads. Only a strong government could rise equal to the situation. The Mongol problem produced another important result on the fortune of the Sultanate. When, in the second half of the fourteenth century, the Mongol threat ceased to operate, the morale of the Sultanate of Delhi went down. It was not necessary to be very vigilant and to keep the military establishment in a state of preparedness. In the absence of this, the morale of the troops fell and decay set in. From after Muhammad bin Tughluq there was hardly any Sultan of Delhi who was possessed of military ability of a high order. Disloyalty and corruption became the rule so far as military commanders and officers were concerned. Seventhly, the government of the Sultan was based on force and not on the consent of the governed. The government cared for two duties only, namely, the maintenance of peace and order and the collection of revenues. No attempt was made, except under Firoz Tughluq, to advance even the material interests of the people. It was, therefore, not expected that the Sultans would be supported by the teeming millions over whom they ruled. Sometimes the people deliberately acted against a Sultan because he or she was their ruler. For example, Raziah was put to death by some Hindu rebels or robbers. The chroniclers of the period do not give any indication as to what ideas

the masses of the people entertained about their rulers. The inscriptions, which were usually drafted in hyperbolic style, do not help us. It seems, however, certain that the people were indifferent towards their foreign sovereigns and did not care as to who occupied the throne of Delhi. There is no record to show that the Hindus rallied round any Sultan in the time of distress.

The effect of Turkish impact on our society

When the Arabs, the Turks, the Afghans, the Iranians and other Central Asian foreigners had conquered and settled down in our country and came into close contact with the indigenous population, they influenced our society and culture and were themselves influenced in turn. The history of the impact of Hinduism and Islam upon one another is a theme of absorbing interest. In the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. the Arabs settled in large numbers on the eastern and western coasts in southern India and it was there that the two religions, for the first time, began to influence each other. Northern India remained immune from Islamic influence until the Arab conquest of Sindh. Dr. Tara Chand, in his enthusiasm for his special subject—*Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*—makes us believe that even the great Shankaracharya, who flourished during the later years of the eighth and the early years of the ninth century A.D., was influenced by Islamic theology, although he admits that there is no direct evidence to substantiate his inference. If Shankaracharya borrowed his theory of monism from Islam, why did he fail to condemn and denounce image-worship to which Muslim theologians of all schools of thought are absolutely opposed ? Moreover, can it not be said that two people could develop a similar line of thought, religious or secular, quite independently of each other ? How very much can it be true of Shankaracharya's *Adwait* philosophy when it is realised on all hands that its germs are found in our *shrutis* and that what he preached is only the logical development of the teachings of the ancient *rishis*. Be that as it may, in northern India, at any rate, the presence of the Turks and the Afghans did not produce a revolutionary effect on our religious thoughts and practices. The bhakti movement, as has been explained elsewhere, was not the direct fruit of the contact between Hinduism and Islam. The teeming millions during the period remained practically unaffected so far as their religious thoughts and practices were concerned. Our upper classes, no doubt, showed a keen desire to bring about a compromise-

between the two religions and in the south our leaders and people extended very generous treatment to the new-comers. Everywhere the foreigners were accorded a place of honour and allowed freely to make converts to their religion. Some of our leaders, reformers and teachers openly preached the gospel of unity and friendliness. Nanak and Kabir, for instance, emphasised the fact that Hinduism and Islam were two different paths leading to the same destination and that Rama and Rahim, Krishna and Karim, and Allah and Ishwara were different names of the same God. They deprecated priestly ritualism and formalities of all religions and emphasised devotion and true piety. But the Musalmans, as a class, kept aloof and failed to appreciate the Hindu attempt at a compromise. The Hindu society was influenced by the presence of Islam in our midst in two respects. Firstly, the missionary zeal of Islam, which aimed at converting the Hindu population to a foreign religion, strengthened conservatism in our ranks. The Hindu leaders believed that the one way of saving their religion and society from the onslaught of Islam was to make themselves as orthodox in outlook and practice as possible. So, attempts were made to make caste rules more rigorous. Daily rules of life were prescribed with a rigidity that was unknown before. New rules of conduct were formulated in our *Shrutis*. Hindu scholars, like Madhava, Visvesvara and others, wrote works and commentaries prescribing a rigid religious life for the people. Early marriage was brought in. Rigid *purdah* was enforced. Strict rules of diet and marriage were also prescribed. Secondly, some of the democratic principles of Islam were borrowed by our leaders and reformers who stressed the equality of castes and preached that caste was no bar to religious salvation. The bhakti cult, though not the result of the impact of Hinduism and Islam, was, nevertheless, influenced to some extent by the presence of Islam in our midst. Our reformers preached fundamental equality of all religions and unity of God-head. There was a similar effect on our literature, too; but it was slight. Very few among the Hindus took to the study of Persian or Arabic in that age. The Sanskrit and Hindi works of the time do not betray any appreciable Islamic influence on their style or themes. After Amir Khusrav there was no notable musician at Delhi. Indian music, therefore, was little influenced by Islamic ideas. There is no evidence to show that the early Turko-Afghan rulers of Delhi had any fondness for painting. Indian painting continued its even tenure of life

without being, in any way, influenced by the presence of foreigners. The Turko-Afghan rule produced an unhealthy result on the character and dignity of our race. Our upper and middle class people, who had to come into daily contact with the rulers, were obliged to conceal their true feelings about their religion, culture and sundry other matters and to develop a kind of servility of character in order to get on in the world. Many of our men imbibed low cunning and deceit. Therefore, the Hindus, in general, lost manliness of character and straightforwardness in behaviour.

Notwithstanding their desire and determination to the contrary, the conquerors were greatly influenced by our religion and culture. The Indian converts to Islam could not but retain some of their Hindu notions and practices. The worship of saints and shrines was only another form of the Hindu predilection for local and tribal gods which the converts could not shake off. Muslim mysticism, particularly *sufism*, derived inspiration from Hindu *Vedanta*. Some of the Muslim scholars were attracted to the study of Hindu philosophy, like *Yoga* and *Vedanta*. Some studied Hindu medicine and astrology. The Turko-Afghan rulers had to adopt Indian food and to modify their dress to suit Indian conditions and climate. They borrowed the gorgeous ceremonial paraphernalia of the Rajput courts in the field of administration, particularly those of the departments of revenue and finance. They could not fail to make use of Indian elephants in their battles. The Islamic architecture, which the foreigner brought with him, was so greatly modified by our art tradition that it ceased to be purely Islamic. As we have seen elsewhere, the buildings erected by the Sultans of Delhi and the rulers of the provincial dynasties were the result of the united genius and effort of the Hindus and the foreign Musalmans. Though they retained Persian as their court and literary language, it became necessary to make compromise with indigenous languages and the result was the birth of Urdu. Thus, there gradually emerged a linguistic synthesis as the result of our mutual contact. Similarly, Muslim manners and customs were greatly influenced. The Hindu converts to Islam retained their caste in many parts of the country. Some of the aristocratic Muslim families assimilated the Hindu custom of *sati* and *jauhar*. Mr. Titus is right when he says : "……when all is said there seems to be little doubt that Hinduism has wrought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has wrought in Hinduism which still

continues to pursue the even tenor of its way with a complacency and confidence that are amazing." (*Indian Islam* by Titus)

Why the Hindus failed to absorb Muslims

It is a matter of common knowledge with scholars that the assimilative capacity of ancient Hinduism was so great that it completely absorbed within its fold the earlier invaders, like the Greeks, the Sakas and the Huns. But, on the contrary, the same absorbing Hinduism failed to Hinduise the Turko-Afghan foreigners. It is sometimes believed that our ancestors made no attempt to absorb the new-comers and that the Muslims would have too readily agreed to become Indians in outlook, spirit and way of life only if they had been given an opportunity by the Hindus to do so. But the latter kept them at arm's length and refused to inter-dine and inter-marry with them. This view is not altogether correct. We have unimpeachable recorded evidence to show that, during the early days of the advent of the Arabs and the Turks in this country, Hindu rulers and people meted out a very generous treatment to them. In southern India, where the Arabs had settled in large numbers as early as the eighth century A.D. our rulers not only gave the foreigners every facility in their commercial activities, but also definitely encouraged conversion to Islam. The Zamorin of Calicut "gave orders that in every family of fishermen (*makkuvans*) in his dominion one or more of the male members should be brought up as Muhammadans." Like European traders in a later age, the Arabs were granted certain commercial privileges which were not enjoyed by the indigenous mercantile community. As has been related in a previous chapter, Hindu reformers and teachers emphasised that Hinduism and Islam were two different paths leading to the same goal. They preached that Rama and Rahim, Krishna and Karim, and Ishwara and Allah were different names of the same God. An earnest attempt was made to bring about unity between the two communities by deprecating priestly ritualism and formalities and emphasising religious devotion. Not only were the foreign Muslims honoured and respected, but even Indian converts to Islam were shown regard and a treatment which was better than that meted out to lower castes among the Hindus themselves. In one respect, however, our people did not extend to the foreigners' proper courtesy. That was the sphere of inter-dining and inter-marriage, and the reason was obvious. The Hindu has always believed in ceremonial purity, that is, purity

of the body, dress, dwelling place and the mind, while not only the foreign Turk and Afghan but even the Indian Musalman insisted on leading the kind of life led by the Arabs of the desert. Moreover, the Hindus in general were vegetarian, and even those of them who were meat-eaters, abhorred beef. Muhammadans, on the other hand, were almost cent per cent non-vegetarians and were not prepared to give up cow-slaughter and beef-eating. They refused to accept the cult of *bhakti*. They believed in their 'superiority' and branded the Hindus as an inferior people, effete and unprogressive —*dal ke khane wale*. They were proud of their religion which is clear, definite and rigid in its dogmas, and acted as militant missionaries of Islam. And they had little to gain by merging themselves in a society that was caste-ridden and torn by internal dissensions. Moreover, they had the conquerors' innate pride and were determined to retain their separate identity. If the Hindus looked down upon them as unclean (*malekshas*), they returned the compliment by styling them as *kafirs* or infidels. It was not possible for Hindu missionaries and teachers to succeed with a people who punished apostacy from their faith with death and made it a capital crime for anyone to seduce a Musalman from his religion. If a Hindu, who was converted to Islam, showed any inclination to revert to the religion of his forefathers, he was, according to the laws of the Sultanate, to be put to death; and any Hindu who preached that Hinduism and Islam were alike good religions was liable to capital punishment. Moreover, the Muslim practice of converting a Hindu girl to Islam before marrying her and compelling a Hindu to become Muslim before he could be allowed to marry a Muslim woman[1] stood in the way of a real matrimonial alliance between any two families and militated against the attempt at fusion of the two communities. The early Turks and Afghans did not resent their exclusion from inter-dining. In fact, they tried to turn the Hindu prejudice to their advantage by declaring that so and so had partaken of the prohibited food and had, therefore, become defiled and unfit to remain a Hindu. Under these circumstances all the efforts of our rulers and people and reformers and teachers at bringing about unity between the Indian people and the foreigners met with inevitable failure.

[1] Islam insists on the rigid observance of these fanatical rules even in the 20th century. Princess Fatima of Persia was not allowed to marry her lover Vincent Lee Hillyr, until he had renounced Christianity and embraced Islam (May 1950).

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BABUR (1483—1530)

Birth and boyhood (1843—1494)

Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babur was born on February 14, 1483, in Farghana, of which his father, Umar Shaikh Mirza, was the ruler. He descended from two Central Asian warriors : Timur, the Turkish hero, and Changiz Khan, the leader of the Mongols. He was the fifth descendant of Timur from the side of his father, and fourteenth descendant of Changiz Khan through his mother, Kutlugnigar Khanum. His family belonged to the Chaghatai section of the Turkish race, but he was commonly known as 'Mughul'. Umar Shaikh Mirza was a man of restless character and was not contented with the small resources of Farghana, which formed the northern part of the region known as Mavara-un-Nahr or Trans-Oxiana and is now a part of the Russian province of Turkistan. He was on bad terms with his elder brother, Ahmad Mirza, ruler of Samarqand and Bukhara, and coveted his prosperous territory. Nor could he get on well with his brothers-in-law, Mahmud Khan (ruler of Tashkent, Sairam and Shahrukhia) and Ahmad Khan (ruler of the region between Tashkent and Yelduz). So long as his father-in-law, Yunus Khan, the Mongol, was alive, the rivals were prevented from coming to extremities. After his death in 1486-7 Ahmad Mirza and Mahmud Khan planned (1494) a joint invasion of Farghana, the former invading the capital town of Andijan, while the latter proceeded against the hill-fortress of Akhsi situated in the north of Farghana. Leaving his elder son, Babur, in charge of his capital, Umar Shaikh proceeded to meet his brother-in-law, Mahmud Khan, who besieged the stronghold of Akhsi. It so happened that one day while he went to enjoy the sight of his pigeons the house fell on him and he died instantly (8th June, 1494). His father's sudden death called Babur to the throne when he was only eleven years and four months old.

Babur's early years must have been spent profitably. As later on he could find little leisure to devote to learning, it seems certain that he must have mastered his mother-tongue, Turki, and also Persian, while he was yet almost a child. He was a precocious boy and his faculties were so highly developed that he could easily

appreciate the significance of political events and judge human character. This is clear from his pen-portrait of Umar Shaikh Mirza and some other notables of the time, whom he had seen last when he was but eleven years of age. He must, also, have had military training and acquired experience of administration, war and diplomacy.

As king of Farghana (1494—1502)

When Babur became king in June 1494, at the age of eleven, two enemies were invading his country from two different directions. With the help of his experienced and wise grand-mother, Asian-Daulat Begam, he hurriedly went through his coronation ceremony and put his house in order. Then he addressed himself to the task of saving his country from foreign invaders. First of all he sent a message to his paternal uncle, Ahmad Mirza, to the effect that after conquering Farghana he would place it under somebody. Why not, then entrust the work to him, who was a relative and would cheerfully act as his vassal? The offer was, however, rejected and it led to a war. But fortunately, owing to the ill-health and the suffering of his troops while crossing a rivulet as well as Babur's determination and the loyalty of his followers, Ahmad Mirza decided to beat a retreat to Samarqand. Babur's maternal uncle, Mahmud Khan, also got disheartened by the stiff resistance put up by the besieged at Akhsi and retired to his country. Farghana was thus saved. Babur now took steps to consolidate his position. His good administration and attractive personality won him wide popularity among his subjects.

Samarqand acquired and lost twice (1497—1502)

Samarqand, the capital of Timur, had great fascination for the ambitious young ruler of Farghana. It was a great city full of mosques, colleges, baths, palatial residential buildings and charming gardens. It had been the capital of his ancestor, Timur, who was Babur's ideal man. He aspired to sit on his great ancestor's throne in his capital. Fortunately, his paternal uncle, Ahmad Mirza, died in July 1494, and a civil war ensued among his sons. In 1496 he made his first attempt at conquering Samarqand, but it was foiled. The attempt was repeated next year and was a success. He took his seat on Timur's throne and his great ambition in life was realized. He was, however, obliged to abandon it after a hundred days. He had fallen ill at Samarqand. The news spread to Farghana and caused a rebellion there. After his recovery Babur proceeded to Farghana to quell the rebellion, but Andijan had already fallen into the hands of

the rebels. When Babur returned to Samarqand, he found that that city too had slipped from his grasp.

Babur had now no territory except the small hilly district of Khojend. His men began to slip away one by one and he had only two to three hundred followers left. He became a homeless wanderer. "It came very hard on me," writes Babur in his diary, "I could not help crying a good deal." He tried to reconquer Samarqand, but failed. An attempt on Andijan, too, came to nothing. After many vicissitudes lasting for two years, during which he did not lose cheerfulness of spirit and faith in God and his own destiny, he won Farghana back in 1498, only to lose it in 1500. He was again a homeless wanderer and had to seek refuge "by dangerous tracks among rocks". During 1500-1 he made a desperate attempt on Samarqand, which was in the possession of the Uzbeg chief, Shaibani Khan, defeated him and took possession of the city for the second time. But this time, too, he could not hold it for long as Shaibani Khan, whose defeat rankled like a thorn in his side, was bent upon its recovery. He defeated Babur at Sar-i-Pul in 1502. Babur had again to abandon Samarqand within eight months. He purchased his freedom by giving his sister in marriage to his enemy, Shaibani Khan. He became a fugitive for the third time and had to spend the next three years in hiding, destitution and misery. He had no territory, no home and only a handful of followers. Sometimes he had to beg for his bread from village folk, to go barefooted and travel through dangerous hill tracks in cold weather, which caused considerable hardship to himself and his followers. But, as he tells us in his Memoirs, he always retained buoyancy of spirit and, even in the midst of greatest sufferings, never gave way to despair. He continued his sport and fun as usual.

King of Kabul (1504—1526)

After Babur's defeat in 1501, his great enemy, Shaibani Khan, the Uzbeg chief, gradually made himself master of Trans-Oxiana. He defeated Khusrav Shah, governor of Qunduz and dispersed his army. Many of Khusrav Shah's troops now joined Babur who found himself at the head of over four thousand men. Babur felt strong enough to proceed to Kabul and wrest it from Muqim the Arghun, who had displaced Abdul Razzaq, son of Ulugh Beg Mirza, Babur's uncle. This happened in 1504. "It was in the last ten days of the second *Rabi* (October, 1504)," writes Babur, "that without a fight,

without an effort and by Almighty God's bounty and mercy, I obtained and made subject to me Kabul and Ghazni and their dependent districts." During the next six years he increased his army and took steps to consolidate his hold on his new kingdom. In 1507 he assumed the title of Padshah or emperor, abandoning that of Mirza by which his ancestors were known, and the same year he conquered Kandhar only to lose it within a few weeks. In March 1508, his eldest son, Humayun, was born of his third wife, Mahim.

Samarqand captured and lost for the third time (1511)

Although he had come to a settled life in his new kingdom of Afghanistan, Babur still yearned for Samarqand. He was ambitious of giving a blow to Shaibani Khan, the great enemy of his house who had blotted out the Timuride family from Trans-Oxiana. In 1507 Babur paid a visit to his cousins in Herat, the capital of Sultan Husain Mirza Baiqara, to see if he could secure their help in delivering a blow to Shaibani. But he had to return disappointed. In the last days of 1510 he, however, received the happy news of Shaibani Khan's defeat and death in the battle of Merv with Shah Ismail Safavi of Iran. The hope of regaining his ancestral dominion was revived in Babur's heart and he immediately set out towards Qunduz. He entered into an alliance with Shah Ismail and, with his help, recovered Samarqand and occupied Bukhara and Khurasan in 1511, and the Uzbegs withdrew to Turkistan. Babur's dominions now included Tashkent, Qunduz, Hisar, Samarqand, Bukhara, Farghana, Kabul and Ghazni. But his glory was short-lived. The Uzbegs returned after the withdrawal of the Shah and resolved to recover Trans-Oxiana. In May 1512, their leader, Ubaid-Ullah Khan, had an encounter with Babur at Kul-i-Malik in which the latter was defeated. Babur had to withdraw from Samarqand to Hisar and eventually to abandon the entire Trans-Oxiana. He returned to Kabul in 1513. The chief cause of his discomfiture in Samarqand was his adoption, at the instance of the Shah of Iran, of the *Shia* faith which was obnoxious to the people of Trans-Oxiana, who were mostly orthodox *Sunnis*. By an agreement with the Shah of Iran he was obliged to enforce *Shia* religion in his new kingdom. His withdrawal from Samarqand in 1512 marked the end of Babur's futile attempt to rule over his ancestral kingdom. He now abandoned all hopes of re-ascending the throne of Samarqand which he had won

and lost three times. The only territory that he still possessed in Central Asia was Badakhshan which he left in the charge of Khan Mirza.

While king of Kabul, Babur was obliged to undertake annual expeditions to put down his turbulent Afghan subjects and to realize revenue from them.

Preparation for his role in Hindustan

From the age of eleven Babur was engaged in warfare, sometimes in self-defence, but mostly in pursuit of a scheme of aggressive conquest. He had to meet, times out of number, adversaries who were Turks like himself or Mongols, Uzbegs, Persians and Afghans. In warfare with them he cleverly appropriated some of their peculiar modes of fighting and military tactics. From the Uzbegs he learnt the use of *tulghuma,* which consisted in turning the enemy's flanks and charging him simultaneously on front and rear at break-neck speed. From the Mongols and the Afghans he appropriated their tactics regarding laying ambuscade, luring the enemy away to a place of danger previously marked out and fortified with men and material, and then falling on him all of a sudden from two different directions. From the Persians he acquired the use of fire-arms, while from his own Turkish kinsmen, he learnt the effective use of mobile cavalry. Thus, as the result of his association with various races, Babur came to possess a highly evolved system of warfare of his own which was the result of a scientific synthesis of various modes of fighting, peculiar to a number of Central Asian peoples. This system was characterized by an effective combination of a highly trained and mobile cavalry and scientific artillery, the use of brilliant tactics, such as tha *tulghuma*, and the protection of the front by ranging a series of carts tied together with chains. Besides, the school of adversity, in which Babur had his early training, called forth the great qualities of endurance, patience, cool courage and contempt of death which made him a veteran leader of men, never losing hope and faith even in the most trying circumstances. Between 1514 and 1519 he secured the services of a Turkish artillery-man, named Ustad Ali, whom he appointed Master of his Ordnance. This man helped Babur to have a park of artillery and to raise a considerable body of musketeers. The use of fire-arms had been borrowed by the Persians from the Turks of Constantinople ; Babur, in turn, borrowed the art from the Persians. A few years later, he acquired the services of another Turkish expert, named Mustafa. Under the supervision of these two Turkish gunners,

Babur had a number of pieces of cannon cast and muskets manufactured for the use of his army. He came to possess a powerful park of artillery which largely accounted for his success in India. Thus, his career in Central Asia prepared him for the role that he was destined to play in Indian history.

EARLY EXPEDITIONS ; CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE FIRST BATTLE OF PANIPAT

First raid

In 1503, while he was a guest of the headman of the village of Dikhkat in Trans-Oxiana during one of his periodical wanderings, Babur, for the first time heard from the lips of a contemporary, the headman's mother, aged 111, the story of Timur's invasion of India. His imagination was kindled and he formed the resolution of one day repeating the Indian exploits of his great ancestor. But it was only when his ambition towards the north-west was finally foiled that he decided to try his luck in the south-east. While king of Kabul, he undertook four expeditions to the territory of India. All these were in the nature of reconnaissances. Early in 1519 he undertook his first expedition to India. It was directed against the Yusufzai tribe which was turbulent and would not pay tribute except at the point of the bayonet. After they had been duly punished, Babur proceeded further to Bajaur, which he stormed, his new artillery playing a decisive part in the contest that proved to be stubborn. He ordered the wholesale massacre of the people of the place in order to strike terror into the surrounding population. The fort of Bajaur was occupied. Then he proceeded to the town of Bhera on the Jhelam, which, too, was occupied, the people submitting without offering resistance. Khushab, too, fell into his hands ; but he gave orders that no injury should be done to the people. He looked upon the Panjab as his own, for it had been conquered by Timur in 1398-9. "As it was always in my heart to possess Hindustan," writes Babur, "and as these several countries had once been held by the Turks, I pictured them as my own, and was resolved to get them into my hands, whether peacefully or by force. For these reasons, it being imperative to treat the hillmen well, this order was given : do not hurt or harm flocks and herds of these people, nor even to their cotton-ends and broken needles." He then despatched an ambassador to Delhi "to demand that the countries, which from old had belonged to the Turks, should be given up

to me." But the ambassador was detained at Lahore by Daulat Khan Lodi and Babur received no reply to his message. Leaving Bhera in charge of Hindu Beg he returned to Kabul. The expedition proved to be of no lasting advantage, as the people drove away Hindu Beg immediately after Babur's withdrawal.

Second raid

In September 1519 Babur again turned towards India. He marched through the Khaibar Pass in order to reduce the Yusufzai Afghans to submission. Then he made an attempt to fortify and provision Peshawar to convert it into a base for further operations, but he had to return to Kabul without accomplishing his object, as he had received news of disturbance in Badakhshan.

Third raid

In 1520 Babur undertook his third expedition to India and recovered Bajaur and Bhera, from where his men had been expelled in 1519. Then he proceeded to Sialkot which was capitulated without resistance. But the people of Sayyidpur, who did not like to submit tamely, had to be subdued by force. Meanwhile, Babur received disturbing news from Kandhar, where Shah Beg Arghun was creating strife in his rear. So he returned to that town with the object of bringing it under his possession. During the next two years he engaged himself in an enterprise against Shah Beg and in 1522 he suceeeded in acquiring the fort of Kandhar through the treachery of its governor, Maulana Abdul Baqi. Shah Beg Arghun, who had abandoned Kandhar, established himself as the ruler of Sindh.

Fourth expedition

Babur was now free from complications at home and, in the event of an invasion of India, he felt secure in his rear, as the formidable fort of Kandhar was now in his possession. At this time, he received an invitation from Daulat Khan Lodi, governor of the Panjab, who, being on bad terms with Sultan Ibrahim of Delhi sought his help in making himself master of the Panjab in return for a promise to recognize Babur as his sovereign. Babur readily accepted the invitation and proceeded towards Lahore at the head of a powerful force in 1524. At this very time Ibrahim Lodi had despatched an army to chastise Daulat Khan Lodi. This succeeded in defeating Daulat Khan and driving him into exile. As Babur reached within a few miles of Lahore, the Delhi army, which had

just won success against Daulat Khan, tried to obstruct the invader's path. Babur, thereupon, attacked and scattered it. Next, he captured Lahore and plundered and burnt the town. Then he proceeded to Dipalpur, in the modern Montgomery district, stormed it and put the garrison to sword. Most of the Panjab thus came under his control. At Dipalpur he was joined by Daulat Khan who had now returned from his place of hiding, hoping that he would be restored to the entire province. But Babur kept the Panjab for himself and offered to Daulat Khan only two districts of Jalandar and Sultanpur in assignment. Daulat Khan felt disappointed and treacherously advised Babur to divide his army. His ambitious son, Dilawar Khan, acting against his father's interest, informed Babur of his hostile designs. Consequently Babur bestowed Sultanpur on Dilawar Khan, allowing Daulat Khan to retain Jalandar. He assigned Dipalpur to Alam Khan Lodi, an uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, who was a candidate for the throne of Delhi and was seeking Babur's assistance in his proposed enterprise against his nephew, Sultan Ibrahim. After making these arrangements Babur returned to Kabul, leaving garrisons at Dipalpur, Lahore and Sialkot. He felt that a more powerful force was necessary for the conquest of Hindustan on which he had now set his heart.

As soon as Babur's back was turned, Daulat Khan attacked his son, Dilawar, and seized Sultanpur. Next, he proceeded to Dipalpur and drove away Alam Khan. He made a quick attempt to reoccupy the whole of the Panjab, but he was defeated by Babur's garrison at Sialkot. Ibrahim Lodi was not idle all this time and had sent an army to clear the Panjab of rebels and invaders. Daulat Khan defeated and dispersed this army without difficulty.

After his defeat at the hands of Daulat Khan, the Lodi pretender, Alam Khan, fled to Kabul and there entered into a treaty with Babur who agreed to support Alam Khan's claim to the throne of Delhi on the condition that the latter would leave the entire Panjab to him in full sovereignty. The agreement was of advantage to the Mughul king "as it would give him a legitimate right to what he had only taken by force." After this engagement, Babur sent Alam Khan to Lahore with instructions to his garrisons there to assist him. Babur himself could not proceed immediately owing to an Uzbeg rebellion in Balkh, the suppression of which was indispensable for his safety. On his return to Lahore, Alam Khan was, however, seduced by Daulat to throw away his alliance with Babur and to

cede the Panjab to him (Daulat). Next, they proceeded towards Delhi to fight Ibrahim Lodi who, however, succeeded in inflicting upon them a decisive defeat. When the news of these developments reached Babur he decided finally to embark on an expedition to Hindustan.

The first battle of Panipat (21st April, 1526)

Freed from the Uzbeg menace, Babur set out towards our country in November 1525, and was joined on the way by Humayun with his troops from Badakhshan. At Sialkot he learnt of the defection of Alam Khan and of his failure to attack Delhi. Daulat Khan and Ghazi Khan were now seized with panic and shut themselves up in the fortress of Milwat. Babur immediately besieged the place and compelled Daulat Khan to capitulate. He ordered Daulat Khan to be conducted to his presence with the two swords, with which he had girded himself to fight him, hanging from his neck. As Daulat made delay in bowing, Babur ordered his legs to be pulled to make him bow and reprimanded him for his rebellious conduct. Then he was sent to Bhera to be imprisoned, but he died on the way to that place. At about this time Alam Khan came in a miserable condition and waited on Babur who occupied the Panjab once again without difficulty.

The next step was a contest with Ibrahim Lodi which was a far more difficult task than the conquest of the Panjab. Babur, therefore, made all necessary preparations for it and paid every attention to the Lodi pretender, Alam Khan, whose presence was sure to be of great political importance. As he advanced towards Delhi he received encouraging offers from a number of important nobles of the Delhi court. Probably at this very time Rana Sanga of Chittor sent his proposal for a joint attack upon Ibrahim. As the invader's intention became clear Ibrahim collected a large force and proceeded towards the Panjab to meet him in battle, sending two advance parties towards Hisar. One of these was routed by Humayun. The other, too, was beaten and driven back. After a few marches Babur reached Panipat and set up his camp there. Babur proudly writes in his *Memoirs* that he defeated Ibrahim Lodi with 12 thousand men. His admirer Rushbrook Williams goes a step further and says that he could not have more than eight thousand men and perhaps less than that, on the field of Panipat. But Babur's force had swelled considerably after his success against Daulat Khan because, as usual, thousands of Indian mercenaries were ready to join him and a num-

ber of notable chiefs had already made common cause with him. The strength of his army at Panipat could not have been less than twenty-five thousand. Babur drew up his army east of the town of Panipat with his face to the south and protected his front by a laager of seven hundred movable wagon carts (*araba*) the wheels of every two of which were tied together by ropes made of raw hides. In between the sets of carts he left sufficient gaps—60 to 70 yards each—in order to allow a hundred or more horsemen to charge through abreast. He raised six or seven movable breast works (*tura*) between every pair of guns to afford shelter to his gunners. Artillery was ranged behind the breast works, Ustad Ali on the right side and Mustafa on the left. Behind the artillery was stationed his advance guard which was commanded by Khusrav Kukaltash and Muhammad Ali Jang-Jang. At the back of it was the centre (*ghul*) where Babur himself took up his position. The centre was divided into two divisions—right centre and left centre, Babur himself riding in between the two. His right wing rested on and was sheltered by the town of Panipat, while the left wing was posted in the dry-bed of the river Yamuna, then two miles east of Panipat and not ten miles as now, and was protected by ditches and an *abatis* of felled trees. On the extreme right of the line was posted the right flanking party (right *tulghuma*), and on the extreme left, the left flanking party (left *tulghuma*). These consisted of select Turkish cavalry whose main duty was to turn the enemy's flanks and take him in the rear. Behind the line at a little distance there was the reserve of picked horsemen under Abdul Aziz, the Master of the Horse. The right wing was commanded by Humayun and Khwaja Kilan, while the left by Muhammad Sultan Mirza and Mahdi Khwaja.

Ibrahim Lodi's army, on the other hand, numbered, according to Babur, one lakh of men and one thousand elephants. But considering the fact that there used to be in that age a number of camp-followers and servants for every combatant, the effective fighting strength of Ibrahim's army could not have been more than forty thousand. It consisted of troops of all descriptions who had been hastily raised on the spur of the moment. They were divided into the four traditional divisions—the advance guard, the centre, the right wing and the left wing. The armies came face to face on 12th April, 1526 with a few miles distance between them, but neither side took up the offensive for eight days. During the night of the 20th April Babur sent out 4 to 5 thousand of his men to make a night

attack on the Afghan camp which failed in its object. But it provoked Ibrahim who gave orders for his troops to advance the next morning. They set out in battle array early in the morning and covered the intervening four miles in three hours. When they came near and noticed Babur's front line defences, they hesitated and checked their quick pace abruptly and thus lost the advantage of a shock charge. Moreover the sudden halt of their front line caused confusion and disorder in the long tail of their army. Babur took advantage of the enemy's hesitation and directed his men to take up the offensive. The battle was thus joined on April 21, 1526. Babur immediately ordered his flanking parties to wheel round and attack the enemy in the rear where there was considerable confusion and uncertainty. They made a detour on the right and the left and reaching the Afghan back began to rain arrows on them. At the same time Babur's right and left wings were directed to move forward and attack the enemy. The Afghans were not slow to react. In order to severe the Mughul connection with the town of Panipat and turn his flank through this gap, Ibrahim now ordered an attack on Babur's right wing which found itself in difficulty. Ibrahim's plan was to avoid the enemy laager and guns and push to the main body of Babur's troops and attack them with vigour. But Babur quickly sent reinforcement from the centre which succeeded in repelling the Afghan left wing. The battle now became general and Babur ordered his gunners to open fire. Thus the Lodi army was surrounded and overwhelmed. It found itself exposed to artillery shot in front and arrows on either flank and the rear. Inspite of their being out-manœuvred and outclassed in weapons the Indian army under Ibrahim fought valiantly. The battle lasted from 9 o'clock in the morning till noon, when the superior strategy and generalship of Babur won the day. Ibrahim Lodi was killed fighting bravely to his last breath and 15 thousand of his men lay dead on the field. Of these six thousand fell round the body of their king. Among the victims was Raja Vikramajit of Gwalior who fought like a true Rajput on the side of Ibrahim who had lately been his enemy. "The sun had mounted spear-high," writes Babur, "when the onset began and the battle lasted till mid-day when the enemies were completely broken and routed, and my people victorious and triumphant. By the grace and mercy of Almighty God this difficult affair was made easy to me, and that mighty army in the course of half a day was laid in the dust." On the fall of Ibrahim, the Delhi army broke up in flight.

The victorious Mughuls made a relentless pursuit up to the very gates of Delhi, and slaughtered thousands of fugitives.

Its results

The battle of Panipat proved to be absolutely decisive. The military power of the Lodis was completely shattered, and their king himself lay dead on the field. At the lowest computation twenty thousand of their soldiers had fallen. The sovereignty of Hindustan departed from the Afghan race at least for a temporary period, and passed to the Mughuls who were to retain it, with about 15 years' break, for more than two centuries. The Turko-Afghan ruling class in India had become degenerate and its supremacy was in danger. As a consequence of Babur's success at Panipat new blood and vigour were injected into the foreign ruling class. The Mughul dynasty, which was thus established, gave to the country a series of remarkably successful rules under whom the country was to undertake a new experiment of evolving a composite culture for the land. As far as Babur was concerned, Panipat marks the end of the second stage of his project of the conquest of northern India. Though after this victory he became king of Delhi and Agra yet his real work was to begin after Panipat. There were a few formidable enemies to be encountered before he could become king of Hindustan. But Panipat gave him a valid claim to its sovereignty. His other contests were an attempt to enforce that claim.

Causes of his success

Many factors contributed to Babur's success and his rival Ibrahim's defeat. In the first place, Ibrahim's injudicious policy and his suspicion of his Afghan nobles had so weakened his power that he was not likely to succeed against even a much less formidable antagonist than Babur. He fought on his own, without being backed by the people or even by the Afghan nobility. Secondly, his army, which was hastily recruited and consisted of raw, inexperienced soldiers, was a heterogeneous force, held together only by the sultan's person. It was not animated by any national or religious sentiment. It was organized on clannish basis, the individual soldier obeying his immediate chief and not the supreme head of the army. The troops were, no doubt, brave, but they lacked the qualities of trained and skilful soldiers. Babur was right when he recorded in his diary that the Indian soldier knew how to die and not how to fight. On the other hand, the Mughul army, composed though it was like that

of the Lodi sultan of diverse elements, had been welded into a homogeneous unit by Babur. It was a well-trained and disciplined army and shared its leader's enthusiasm and ambition of conquering rich Hindustan. Thirdly, while the use of gunpowder[1] was not unknown in India since the middle of the fifteenth century, yet no one in Northern India knew the use of fire-arms before the advent of Babur and, therefore, Ibrahim possessed no park of artillery and his soldiers were absolutely innocent of its use. On the contrary, Babur was the master of a powerful park of artillery, consisting of big guns and small muskets, which was in the charge of two master gunners, Ustad Ali and Mustafa. If it could be possible to emphasize any one of the factors as being the most important cause of Babur's success in Hindustan, one would surely have to assign the first place to his artillery. Fourthly, Babur was the master of a highly evolved system of warfare which, as we have already seen, was the result of a scientific synthesis of the tactics of the several Central Asian peoples. But Ibrahim fought according to the old and out-worn system then in existence in the country. Finally, while Babur was one of the greatest generals of his time, Ibrahim was a headstrong, inexperienced youth who could not hope to be a match for his great adversary. As Babur remarks, he was "an inexperienced young man, careless in his movements, who marched without order, halted or retired without method and engaged without foresight." He did not care to throw open the doors of his treasury in order to attract better and more experienced troops. Had he succeeded in securing the assistance of the Rajputs under Rana Sanga and made a combined attempt against their common enemy, Babur would probably have been driven out of the country.

The sequel

Immediately after his victory Babur despatched a detachment of his army under Humayun and Khwaja Kilan to capture Agra, while at the same time he sent another body of his troops to take possession of Delhi and to secure the public treasures there. Then he himself proceeded to Delhi and, before entering the capital, paid a visit to the tombs of Muslim heroes and saints. Thence he went to Agra and on 10th May took up residence in Ibrahim's palace. Humayun welcomed his father and presented to him, among other treasures, the famous Koh-i-noor diamond which was given to him

[1] It was utilized in producing fire-works, not fire-arms.

by the family of the deceased Raja Vikramajit of Gwalior for his generous treatment in the Agra Fort and whose value was supposed to be equal to half the daily expenditure of the whole world. But, with his characteristic generosity, he gave it back to his son along with seventy lakhs of *dams* in recognition of his services. He permitted Ibrahim Lodi's mother to live in a mansion outside Agra and assigned the revenues of a *pargana* for her expenses. Small *jagirs* were given to her officers. Babur generously rewarded his own men, his important *begs* getting 6 to 10 lakhs of *dam* each. Every soldier and every camp-follower, down to the meanest man among them, was given his share of the booty. Babar's friends in Farghana, Khurasan, Kashghar and Iran were sent gifts of gold and silver and other rare articles, including even human slaves. Offerings were sent to the holy places in Mecca, Madina, Samarqand and Herat. All the inhabitants of Kabul, men, women and children, received one silver coin each. So generously did Babur distribute the accumulated treasures of generations which he found at Delhi, Agra and Gwalior and left so little for himself, that he was called in jest a '*qalandar*', (begging friar).

TASK AFTER PANIPAT : OCCUPATION OF THE COUNTRY

Difficulties after Panipat

Babur's real work in the country began after Panipat. Taking advantage of the confusion that followed Ibrahim Lodi's death, many of the Afghan chiefs had established themselves as independent monarchs and fortified their strongholds. Qasim Sambhali set himself up as the ruler of Sambhal, Nizam Khan became king of Bayana, Hasan Khan Mewati that of Mewat, Muhammad Zaitun of Dholpur, Tatar Khan of Gwalior, Husain Khan Lohani of Rapri, Qutub Khan of Etawa and Alam Khan of Kalpi. Nasir Khan Lohani, Maruf Farmuli and some other *amirs* held Kanauj and the neighbouring territory on the other side of the Ganga. Bahar Khan, son of Dariya Khan Lohani, set himself up as king of Bihar under the title of Sultan Muhammad. Marghub, a slave, became the ruler of Mahaban. Moreover as Babur proceeded towards Agra, the people in the countryside fled in fear and he could get provisions for his men and fodder for his animals with very great difficulty. The people took to brigandage and made roads unsafe. The summer season was at hand and Babur's men insisted on getting leave to return to Kabul. In the face of these difficulties he showed his usual

patience and strength of character. Instead of being dismayed, he faced the situation boldly and exhorted his men to stay on and not to allow the splendid opportunity to slip away for want of courage. He addressed his men eloquently. "I told them," writes he, "that empire and conquest could not exist without the material and means of war ; that royalty and nobility could not exist without subjects and dependent provinces ; that by the labour of many years, after undertaking great hardships, measuring many a toilsome journey and raising various armies—after exposing myself and my troops to circumstances of great danger, to battle and bloodshed, by the Divine favour I had routed my formidable enemy and achieved the conquest of numerous provinces and kingdoms which we at present hold. And now what force compels, what hardship obliges us without visible cause . . . to abandon and fly from our conquests . . . ? Let every one who calls himself my friend never henceforward make such a proposal ; but if there is any among you who cannot bring himself to stay, or give up his purpose of return, let him depart."

The appeal succeeded. All the officers and men decided to stay on and support him. Only one or two disagreed and left for Kabul.

Conquest of Mid-Hindustan

When it became clear that Babur had chosen to stay on in the country and rule over it, several Afghan and non-Afghan chiefs, who had chosen to sit on the fence, submitted to him. Shaikh Guren of Koil (Aligarh), Shaikh Bayazid, Firoz Khan, Mahmud Khan Lohani and some other prominent notables submitted to the invader, joined him with their troops and were confirmed in their territories. With regard to those that still held out, Babur took prompt steps to force them to submission. He followed the clever device of dividing unconquered towns, fortresses and districts among his prominent officials and sent them with their troops to take possession of them. This policy was eminently successful. Humayun acquired possession of Sambhal, Muhammad Ali Jang-Jang captured Rapri, Mahdi Khwaja conquered Etawa, Sultan Muhammad acquired Kanauj and Junaid Barlas took Dholpur. There remained only two formidable groups to be dealt with—the Afghan chiefs of Awadh and Bihar and the Rajputs under Rana Sanga of Rajasthan. The general opinion of Babur's men was that the Afghans were more formidable and should be tackled with immediately ; Rana Sanga was at a long distance and might have little strength to proceed against Agra.

Accordingly, Humayun was sent against Nasir Khan Lohani and Maruf Farmuli, who had captured Kanauj and had established themselves so near Delhi. As Humayun reached within twenty miles of Jajmau near Kanpur the two Afghan leaders retreated without fighting. Kanauj, thus, fell into the hands of the Mughuls, and Humayun, proceeding in pursuit, took Jaunpur and Ghazipur. About this very time Gwalior was also taken by a stratagem.

The battle of Khanua (March 17, 1527)

While Babur was in Kabul Rana Sanga is said to have entered into an understanding with him agreeing to attack Ibrahim from the side of Agra, while Babur attacked him from the north. The invader, after he had occupied Delhi and Agra, accused the Rana of bad faith. Sanga, on the other hand, accused Babur of having occupied Kalpi, Dholpur and Bayana which, according to the terms of the understanding, were to go to him. But this could not be said to have been the main cause of the rupture between them. Rana Sanga, who had thought that Babur, like his ancestor Timur and so many other invaders, would retire after plundering the country, was disillusioned and awakened to a sense of danger when he saw that the Mughul intruder had not only occupied the country but decided to stay on. For the first time in our medieval history a Rajput king had succeeded in organizing a confederacy of most of the kings of Rajasthan with the clear and definite object of recovering northern India from the hands of the Afghans. It is a pity that he could not see the wisdom of first combining with Ibrahim to expel the invader and then settling his scores with the degenerate Lodi monarch. As it was, he found to his surprise that a fresh Turkish invader in the person of Babur had deprived him of his ambition of re-establishing indigenous rule at Delhi. Sanga was a warrior of great fame and his heroic exploits were known and admired all over the country. His ability and strength, ambition and patriotism, impelled him to make an attempt to drive away the invader and save the country from the imposition of a fresh foreign yoke. Having collected a powerful army, which is said to have consisted of seven Rajput kings and 104 chiefs, he marched on Bayana and defeated its governor, Mahdi Khwaja, and compelled him to take shelter within its formidable walls. The Rana was now joined by a number of powerful chiefs, including Silahadi of Raisin, Hassan Khan Mewati and Mahmud Lodi, brother of the late Sultan Ibrahim. The Rana wisely recognized Mahmud Lodi as king of Delhi. Rushbrook

Williams has, perversely enough, called the alliance between the Rana and Hasan Mewati "an unholy alliance whose only bond of union was a common desire to expel Babur from India." It was a most natural thing in the world to have combined against a foreign invader, for, despite the belief of the above learned historian, political alliances are everywhere based on identity of interest. Babur, who, a short while before, had fortunately escaped from being poisoned by Ibrahim Lodi's mother, despatched Muhammad Sultan Mirza with a body of light horse to the relief of Bayana and himself began making preparations for a final contest with the Rajputs. This force was unable to come into contact with the garrison at Bayana. It was struck with terror and brought to Babur the stories of Rajput bravery and exploits. By this time, Babur had reached Sikri and sent 1,500 troops to reconnoitre his adversary's position. These were badly defeated and repulsed with great slaughter and loss of their standard. A battle now became inevitable. The Rana had already advanced to a hill near Khanua, a village in the modern Bharatpur division, 37 miles west of Agra and 10 miles from Sikri. Babur was in a highly precarious position. His troops were nervous and afraid of the Rajput valour and bravery. An astrologer from Kabul made a prophecy that he would suffer a defeat. This made the Mughul troops all the more panicky. It became necessary for Babur to raise their spirit by dramatically renouncing wine, pouring his store of liquor on the ground and breaking his precious vessels before an assemblage of his officers and troops. He abolished the stamp duty (*tamgha*) for all Muslims. Even then the morale of his dispirited men was not raised as high as he wished. So he convened a meeting of his army-men and made a direct appeal to them in the following manner : "My Lords and comrades in arms ! Do you know that there lies a journey of some months between us and the land of our birth and our familiar city ? If our side is defeated (God preserve us from that day ! God forbid it !) where are we ? Where is our birthplace—where is our city ? We have to do with strangers and foreigners. But let every man remember that whosoever enters this world is subject to destruction ; for God alone is eternal and unshakable. He who commences the banquet of life must at length drain the cup of death. Better it is to die gloriously than to live with a name disgraced. If I die with glory, all is for the best. Let me leave an honourable name, for certainly my body cannot escape death. Almighty God has ordained for us this fortune and put before us this

noble destiny, that if we are vanquished, we die martyrs ; but if we conquer, we have won His holy cause. Therefore, let us swear in the name of the Almighty that we will never flee from a death so glorious ; and that while our souls are not separate from our bodies, our bodies shall never be separate from perils of this combat."

He promised that after victory he would allow leave to every one who wanted to go home. He had already declared a holy war (*jihad*) against the Rana and he reminded his men that he was fighting for the glorification of his religion. The response was instantaneous and enthusiastic. Everyone swore on the *Quran* and by the divorce of his wife that he would fight to the end and stand by Babur. The spirit of his troops was thus completely restored. Some skirmishers, sent ahead, attacked a few stragglers of the Rana's army and brought their heads, which went a long way in restoring the confidence of the Mughuls.

By this time Babur had reached Khanua. The Rana was already there, and the armies now came face to face with each other. According to Babur the Rajput army numbered two lakhs ; but their effective fighting strength could not have been more than 80,000. Rushbrook Williams puts Babur's army at 8 to 10 thousand effectives, which is, without doubt, a very low estimate. We have it on the authority of *Baburnama* that many thousands of Afghans and other troops had joined Babur after the battle of Panipat and considerably swelled his army which could not have been less than 40,000. Rushbrook Williams concludes, on imaginary grounds, that "it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that in effectives the Rajput chieftain outnumbered his antagonist by 7 or 8 to 1." The fact, however, was that the odds were 2 : 1.

Babur arranged his army after the same fashion as at Panipat. In front there were nearly one thousand gun-carts arranged in one long line and tied together by iron chains, not by ropes of animal skin as at Panipat. In between every set of two linked carts sufficient gaps of about 60 to 70 yards were left, to enable a hundred horsemen to sally out. The artillery was posted in a line behind the row of carts and was commanded by Nizam-ud-din Ali Khalifa. Ustad Ali Quli with his mortar and other wheeled guns was posted in front of the centre, while Mustafa Khan with his musketeers and swivel guns was placed in front of the centre of the right wing. Instead of breastworks Babur had constructed wheeled wooden tripod-stands with movable shields or mantlets fixed to them which afforded shelter to the gun-

ners, besides serving as resting places for the guns. Behind the artillery were arrayed the mounted troops divided into centre, right wing and left wing with the *tulghuma* or flanking parties on the extreme right and left of the main line. Babur took his stand in the centre. Chin Timur and Khusrav Kukaltash took their position to his right, while Humayun with Dilawar Khan and some other Indian nobles were posted on the right wing. Mahadi Khwaja commanded the left wing. There were the flanking parties to the extreme right and left. The Rana's army was divided into the four traditional divisions—advance guard, centre and right and left wings. The battle began at about 9 in the morning of 17th March, 1527 with a shot from Ustad Ali's mortar which threw a large stone ball with a terrific noise and frightened the Rajputs. Even elephants could not stand before it. On account of this and defection of Silhadi who went over to join the enemy, Sanga had to modify his original plan and avoiding Babur's centre with its formidable artillery which his men had never seen or faced before, he opened the attack by ordering his left wing to charge Babur's right flanking party (*tulghuma*) in order to roll up the Mughul line from the right. Both the right *tulghuma* and the right wing suffered so much from the shock that they were about to give way when Babur despatched Chin Timur to their relief. He attacked the Rajput left wing and penetrated inside it, causing some confusion among its troops. At this time, Mustafa was ordered to move forward his tripods into the open field and fire. The artillery did its work so satisfactorily that the Mughul morale was restored. But the Rajputs made repeated attacks on the Mughul right wing and, therefore, troops from the centre had also to be sent to its assistance. Inspite of Rajput bravery the Mughul right wing ultimately pushed the Rana's left wing back. The Rana now ordered an attack on the Mughul left wing. At this time, the left flanking party was directed to wheel round and attack the Rajput rear. Even this did not prevent the brave Rana from maintaining a pressure on the left wing of the enemy. Babur was, therefore, obliged to send a select body of cavalry to reinforce his heavily suffering left wing. By this time the battle had become general and all the divisions of both the sides became engaged in a deadly conflict. Notwithstanding the fearful onslaught caused by the Mughul artillery, the valiant Rajputs "by their repeated attacks reduced Babur's men almost to their last gasp." Victory seemed to hang in the balance, and, if it inclined any way, it was in favour of the Rajputs. But without being dismayed, Babur,

with the instinct of a general, ordered his picked household cavalry in the centre to charge his antagonists in two compact bodies. Ustad Ali was, at the same time, instructed to redouble his efforts. This manoeuvre was successful. The Rajput right and left wings were thrown into confusion by the fire from Babur's guns and by the simultaneous cavalry charges of his household troops. Not minding the murderous fire that was taking a heavy toll of his men, the Rana hurled his dauntless men upon Babur's right and left wings which were trying to envelope him. "Desperate, indeed, was that final charge, the Mughul wings were driven from their enveloping position and, forced back almost in a line with their centre nearly, it seemed, to the place where Babur himself was standing. On the left, where the pressure was the greatest, the Rajputs came within an ace of breaking through." But the Mughul artillery proved too much even for the death-defying Rajput heroes. They could not stand it any longer and showed signs of collapse. Even Sanga was wounded and removed senseless from the field. At this psychological moment Babur ordered his two wings to make another charge. The Rajputs now dispersed and Babur who had almost despaired of victory, won the day. The battle of Khanua was over. The victor took possession of the Rana's camp, but made no pursuit of the fugitives.

Results of the battle

The battle of Khanua, which lasted for ten hours, was one of the most memorable battles in Indian history. Hardly was any other battle so stubbornly contested with its issue hanging in the balance till almost its very end. Nevertheless, from the military point of view it proved to be highly decisive. The loss on the side of the Rana was terrible. Sangram Sing himself was wounded and conducted by his faithful followers to a place of safety to die a broken-hearted man in January, 1528. A number of other notable chiefs, including Hasan Mewati, fell on the field. The slaughter among the rank and file of the defeated army was terrible ; but Mahmud Lodi escaped safely. The military power of the Rajputs was crippled, but not completely broken. They rose again within a few years and Bahadur Shah of Gujarat and Ser Shah of Delhi had to reckon with them. The latter (Sher Shah, 1540-45) was so much impressed by their valour that he had to confess that he had endangered the empire of Hindustan for a handful of *bajra* (millet). It is worthy of note that even after his victory over the Rana, Babur shrank from invading Rajasthan and provoking the brave Rajputs any further. He stopped

short after acquiring the fortress of Chanderi. The political consequences of the battle were also great. The Rajput ambition of banishing the foreign rule was completely shattered. Hereafter the rulers of Rajasthan never made any combined attempt to re-establish Hindu rule in northern India. As far as Babur was concerned, his period of wandering was over. He had no longer to fight for his safety or that of his newly established state in India. If he was engaged in warfare, it was for the extension of his dominion or for putting down rebellions within it. "Hitherto," observes Rushbrook Williams, "the occupation of Hindustan might have been looked upon as a mere episode in Babur's adventure ; but from henceforth it became the key-note of his activities for the remainder of his life . . . And it is significant of the new stage in his career which this battle marks that never afterwards does he have to stake his throne and life upon the issue of a stricken field . . . And it is also significant of Babur's grasp of vital issues that from henceforth the centre of gravity of his power is shifted from Kabul to Hindustan."

Activities after Khanua ; the battle of Ghaghara (May 6, 1529)

After this great victory Babur invaded Mewat and entered its capital, Alwar, on 7th April, 1527. He also took steps to despatch his troops in various directions to reduce to submission those of the chiefs and vassals who had repudiated allegiance to him on the eve of the battle of Khanua. Chandwar and Rapri were recovered. Etawa was also re-occupied. Babur himself undertook an expedition against Chanderi, situated near Bhopal and on the border of Bundelkhand and Malwa, which was in the possession of the famous Rajput chief Medini Rai, who had acquired for himself the position of a king maker of Malwa. The Mughuls besieged him. The garrison feeling that they could not resist for long, put their women to death and rushed on the enemy with naked swords and were killed almost to a man. Babur captured the place on 29th January, 1528. He now felt secure and gave leave to those of his officers, whose health was seriously impaired, to return to Kabul ; Humayun was sent to take charge of Badakhshan.

Next he proceeded against Bibban, who had driven away the Mughuls from Awadh and captured Lucknow. Having crossed the Ganga he defeated Bibban and drove him into Bangal. A little before this Mahmud Lodi, who had escaped from Khanua after Rana Sanga's defeat, established himself in Bihar and gathered a large army

which was estimated at one lakh strong. At the head of this force he advanced on Banaras and proceeded beyond it as far as Chunar. He laid siege to the fortress of Chunar ; but, as Babur proceeded against him, the Afghans were filled with consternation, raised the siege and withdrew. Babur pursued and drove them into Bangal.

Anxious to put an end to the Afghan menace once for all, Babur decided to bring them to battle. But he was at peace with Nusrat Shah of Bangal with whom the Afghan chiefs, headed by Mahmud Lodi, had taken shelter. So he opened negotiations with Nusrat Shah, but nothing came out of it. He was obliged, therefore, to send an ultimatum asking for a passage and, in the event of refusal, holding him responsible for the consequences. He fought a battle with the Afghans on the confluence of the Ganga and its tributary, the Ghagara, on 6th May, 1529. In the conflict, which was tough, boats and artillery were used by both sides. The Afghans were defeated. A treaty was now concluded between Babur and Nusrat Shah. Each party was to respect the sovereignty of the other and Nusrat Shah agreed not to give shelter to Babur's enemies. This was Babur's last battle in India. As the result of this contest he became the sovereign of Bihar, and the Afghan chiefs joined him with their troops. He was now in possession of this country from the Indus to Bihar and from the Himalayas to Gwalior and Chanderi. The Mughuls had obtained possession of Multan, and, therefore, in the north-western corner of the country only Sindh remained beyond the pale of Mughul rule.

LAST DAYS AND DEATH

His conception of sovereignty

Babur had now no major military problem to face as the conquest of northern India was complete. But he had to establish a theory of kingship. The Afghan theory of kingship, according to which the monarch was the chief among the nobles, was unsuitable and was likely to give rise to troubles which the country had experienced during the days of the Lodis. Ibrahim had failed to impose his authority, as his government was a "human concession" and not a Divine Right monarchy. The title of Sultan did not find favour with Babur. He had already discarded that of Mirza and styled himself Padshah or Emperor, showing thereby that his was an authority superior to that enjoyed by the rulers of the Sultanate period. He believed that the monarch derived his authority from God. In short,

Babur stood for Divine Right monarchy, which met the needs of the time. The idea was akin to Hindu conception of sovereignty, according to which the ruler was something more than a mere human being.

Babur had decided to make this country his home. In view of this decision, immediately after his success at Panipat, he occupied himself during the intervals of leisure to construct for himself a palace at Agra and to raise buildings at other places, particularly baths, and to lay out charming and symmetrical gardens which, he said, afforded shelter from the three curses of Hindustan—heat, dust and wind. He also spent his leisure in taking steps to restore order in the empire which had been thrown into confusion during the last years of Ibrahim Lodi's reign. His policy was to appoint powerful military governors to various provinces who could maintain peace and order in their respective jurisdictions. He wanted to conciliate the people as far as possible. This work kept him busy during the last six months of 1529.

Illness and death

Meanwhile Humayun, who had been sent as governor of Badakhshan after the battle of Khanua, left his charge and returned to Agra without his father's permission. He was instructed to go to his *jagir* at Sambhal, where he fell ill. He was, consequently, brought to Agra by water. Notwithstanding all possible medical assistance he showed no signs of improvement. Babur consulted the well-known saint, Abu Baqa, who advised Humayun to seek remedy from God and give away in charity the most valuable thing in his possession. Babur intervening said : "I am the most valuable thing that Humayun possesses . . . I shall make myself a sacrifice for him. May God, the Creator, accept it." So saying he walked three times round the bed of Humayun and said that he had taken his illness upon himself. It is said by the chroniclers that a little after this dramatic incident Babur was taken ill and Humayun began to get well. While on his death bed, he nominated Humayun his successor and entrusted his other sons and family to his care. He died on 26th December, 1530. Professor Sri Ram Sharma in a learned article contributed to the *Calcutta Review* (1936), disbelieves the story of Babur's taking away the illness of his son and dying as a result of this transfer. He has shown that Babur fell ill nearly six months after the recovery of Humayun from illness. His conclusion

cannot be brushed aside light-heartedly. It is superstitious to imagine that the ailment of one person can be transferred to another by invocation and prayers. Babur's body was laid to rest at Arambagh in Agra, whence it was subsequently carried to Kabul and buried at a beautiful spot which had been selected by Babur himself for the purpose.

Babur's description of Hindustan

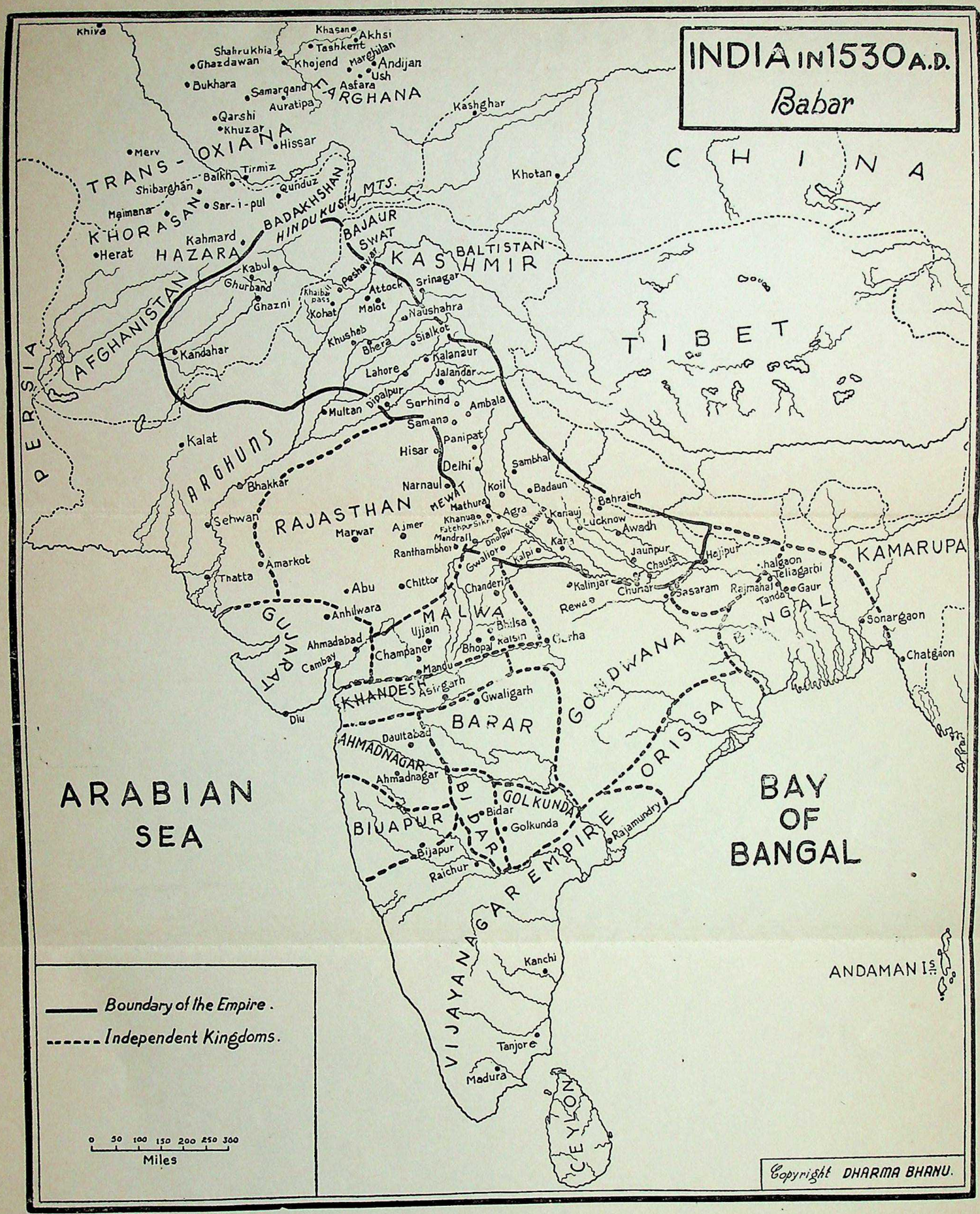
Babur was gifted with uncommon powers of observation. While travelling through northern India he took care to take note of the physical features of the country, its climate, flora and fauna, and the social, economic and cultural conditions of the people. All these he described in his autobiography. When he entered the heart of the country it did not impress him much. He looked at it through a conqueror's eye. His impressions cannot be better described than in his own words :

"Hindustan," writes Babur, "is a country of few charms. Its people have no good looks ; of social intercourse, paying and receiving visits there is none ; of genius and capacity none ; of manners none ; in handicraft and work there is no form or symmetry, method or quality ; there are no good horses, no good dogs, no grapes, musk-melons or first-rate fruits, no ice or cold water, no good bread or cooked food in the bazars, no hot baths, no colleges, no candles, torches or candle-sticks.

"In place of candle and torch they have a great dirty gang they call lamp-men (*diwati*), who in the left hand hold a smallish wooden tripod to one corner of which a thing like the top of a candle-stick is fixed, having a wick in it about as thick as the thumb. In the right hand they hold a gourd, through a narrow slit made in which oil is let trickle in a thin thread when the wick needs it. Great people keep a hundred or two of these lamp-men. This is the Hindustan substitute for lamps and candle-sticks ! If their rulers and Begs have work at night needing candles, these dirty lamp-men being these lamps, go close up and there stand.

"Except their large rivers and their standing-waters which flow in ravines or hollows (there are no waters), there are no running waters in their gardens or residences (*imaratlar*). These residences have no charm, air (*hawa*), regularity or symmetry.

"Peasants and people of low standing go about naked. They tie on a thing called *languta*, a decency-clout which hangs two spans


INDIA IN 1530 A.D.
Babar
CHINA
TIBET
KAMARUPA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
ANDAMAN Is.
CEYLON
PERSIA
TRANS-OXIANA
FARGHANA
KHORASAN
HAZARA
AFGHANISTAN
BADAKHSHAN
HINDUKUSH MTS.
BAJAUR
SWAT
BALTISTAN
KASHMIR
ARGHUNS
RAJASTHAN
MEWAT
GUJARAT
MALWA
KHANDESH
BARAR
AHMADNAGAR
BIJAPUR
BIDAR
GOLKUNDA
GONDWANA
ORISSA
BANGAL
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE
Khiva
Khasan
Akhsi
Tashkent
Shahrukhia
Ghazdawan
Khojend
Marghilan
Andijan
Ush
Bukhara
Samarqand
Asfara
Auratipa
Qarshi
Khuzar
Hissar
Merv
Tirmiz
Balkh
Shibarghan
Qunduz
Maimana
Sar-i-pul
Kahmard
Herat
Kabul
Ghurband
Ghazni
Kandahar
Kashghar
Khotan
Peshawar
Khaibar pass
Kohat
Attock
Malot
Srinagar
Naushahra
Khushab
Bhera
Sialkot
Kalanaur
Lahore
Jalandar
Dipalpur
Multan
Sarhind
Ambala
Samana
Panipat
Hisar
Delhi
Sambhal
Kalat
Bhakkar
Narnaul
Koil
Badaun
Bahraich
Sehwan
Mathura
Agra
Khanua
Fatehpur Sikri
Etawa
Kanauj
Lucknow
Awadh
Marwar
Ajmer
Mandrail
Dholpur
Kara
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Kalpi
Jaunpur
Chausa
Hajipur
Amarkot
Thatta
Abu
Chittor
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Chunar
Sasaram
Rajmahal
Teliagarhi
Gaur
Tanda
Rewa
Anhilwara
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Kalsin
Garha
Ahmadabad
Champaner
Bhopal
Cambay
Mandu
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Diu
Daultabad
Ahmadnagar
Bidar
Golkunda
Bijapur
Raichur
Rajamundry
Kanchi
Tanjore
Madura
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
Boundary of the Empire.
Independent Kingdoms.
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
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below the navel. From the tie of this pendant decency-clout, another clout is passed between the thighs and made fast behind. Women also tie on a cloth (*lang*) one-half of which goes round the waist, the other is thrown over the head.

"Pleasant things of Hindustan are that it is a large country and has masses of gold and silver. Its air in the rains is very fine. Sometimes it rains 10, 15 or 20 times a day ; torrents pour down all at once and rivers flow where no water had been. While it rains, and through the rains, the air is remarkably fine, not to be surpassed for healthiness and charm. The fault is that the air becomes very soft and damp. A bow of those (Trans-Oxanian) countries after going through the rains in Hindustan, may not be drawn even ; it is ruined ; not only the bow, everything is affected, armour, book, cloth and utensils all ; a house even does not last long. Not only in the rains but also in the cold and the hot seasons, the airs are excellent ; at these times, however, the north-west wind constantly gets up laden with dust and earth. It gets up in great strength every year in the heats, under the Bull and Twins, when the rains are near ; so strong and carrying so much dust and earth that there is no seeing one another. People call this wind Darkener of the Sky (Hindi *Andhi*). The weather is hot under the Bull and Twins, but not intolerably so, not so hot as in Balkh and Kandhar and not far half so long.

"Another good thing in Hindustan is that it has unnumbered and endless workmen of every kind. There is a fixed caste (*Jam'i*) for every sort of work and for everything, and it has done that work or that thing from father to son till now. Mulla Sharaf, writing in the *Zafar-Nama* about the building of Timur Beg's Stone Mosque, lays stress on the fact that on it 200 stone-cutters worked, from Azarbaijan, Fars, Hindustan and other countries. But 680 men worked daily on my buildings in Agra and of Agra stone-cutters only ; while 1491 stone-cutters work daily on my buildings in Agra, Sikri, Bayana, Dholpur, Gwalior and Koil. In the same way there are numberless artisans and workmen of every sort in Hindustan." (*Memoirs*, pp. 518-20).

Some of these unfavourable observations of Babur were hasty and sweeping judgments. There is no doubt that he would have revised his opinion and corrected himself if he had lived some time longer in this country. His first impressions were those of a conqueror who looked down upon the conquered people. The men in the countryside had fled from before him. He could not but imagine

that Indians were unsocial and unsociable. Had he come into contact with the educated middle and upper class people he would have known that our forefathers did not suffer from want of intellectual excellence and genius. One need not, therefore, take some of the remarks of Babur too seriously.

The Memoirs

The book in which Babur recorded his impressions about our country is his autobiography, styled the *Tuzuk-i-Baburi*, popularly known as the *Memoirs of Babur*. The book was originally written by Babur during his intervals of leisure in his mother-tongue Turki. It was twice translated in Persian, first by Payanda Khan and, subsequently, by Abdur Rahim Khan Khana. It has been translated into several European languages, particularly French and English. Three important translations in English are those of King, Leyden and Erskine, and A. S. Beveridge. The last named scholar (Mrs. Beveridge) translated the work from the original Turki, while the others had translated it from the Persian version. Beveridge's translation, therefore, is the most authentic and reliable.

Babur's style is at once plain and graceful. Unlike other writers of the time he comes straight to the subject, does not give elaborate introduction and is matter of fact, brief and yet exhaustive in his descriptions. He was master of a flawless style in Turki. The work is characterized by a candour and freshness which were all his own. Babur has frankly given his faults, failings and vices as well as virtues. The entire work reads like a romance. Once a reader commences reading he wants to finish it, for the interest in the story never flags. Besides describing political and military events and giving pen-pictures of notable celebrities of the age, he has given a detailed description of the physical features and the nature of the country, its animals and birds, flowers and trees. The *Memoirs* reveal Babur as one intensely fond of the beauties of nature and adorned with essentially human virtues and faults. They are considered to be one of "the most enthralling and romantic works in the literature of all time". The book is a first-rate authority on the history of the age. Unfortunately, it is not complete and all the known copies have three gaps—from 1508 to 1519, from 1520 to 1525, and from 1529 to 1530.

Character and estimate

By the unanimous consent of historians, contemporary and modern, Babur was one of the most brilliant monarchs of medieval

Asia. His cousin, Mirza Haider, the author of the celebrated *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, was of opinion that he was "adorned with various virtues and clad with numberless excellences, above all which towered bravery and humanity . . . Indeed, no one of his family before him ever possessed such talents, nor any of his race performed such amazing exploits or experienced such strange adventures." His daughter Gulbadan Begam in her *Humayun Nama* spoke of him in a similar strain. All modern writers have echoed the contemporary authorities. V. A. Smith, for example, called him "the most brilliant Asiatic prince of his age and worthy of a high place among the sovereigns of any age or country . . . " Havell considered him to be "one of the most attractive figures in the history of Islam." Rushbrook Williams is all praise for him both as a man and as a king, while Denison Ross gives him a high place among the sovereigns of the age.

As a man. As a private gentleman Babur's character was exemplary. He was a very dutiful son. Though his father died while he was a little over eleven years, he cherished his memory with affection. He loved his mother and grandmother and maternal grandfather and showed them regard that bordered on reverence. Though polygamous like most Muhammadan rulers and noblemen, he was thoroughly attached to his wives and knew what it was to love one's consorts. He was a good friend and not only remembered the playmates of his boyhood but wept bitterly on their death. He was a kind relative and went out of his way to assist those of his kinsmen who needed relief. A believer in the essential goodness of human nature his heart was full of the milk of human kindness. Though not altogether free from some of the faults usually associated with born aristocrats, Babur's private life was, on the whole, marked by a standard of morality that was rare in the country of his birth and in the age to which he belonged. He was fond of liquor and sometimes drank to excess ; but unlike his son, Humayun, he never became a slave to intoxicants. His relations with women were governed by a restraint which was unknown to his Central Asian contemporaries. He was not a slave to luxuries, ease or pleasure of life. Fond of adventures, he was restless in body and mind and took delight in facing uncommonly dangerous situations in life. Having been trained in the school of adversity, he had got accustomed to privation and had developed qualities of courage, patience and endurance of a high degree. Possessed of physical prowess, he could run on a rampart holding to men in his arms. He swam across every

river he met in India except the Ganga, and once, in a fit of enthusiasm, he crossed the Ganga also and counted his strokes which were thirty-three.

As a scholar. Hardly surpassed in culture and in the urbanity of his manner, Babur was a great scholar and a lover of fine arts, a keen and critical judge of the beauties of nature and an acute observer of men and things. Accomplished writer of a flawless style in Turki, he has immortalized himself in his celebrated *Memoirs*. He was a first-rate poet of Turki and his *Diwan* in that language is an outstanding work of poetry admired by his contemporaries and posterity alike. He composed poems in Persian also and was the inventor of a style of verse called *Mubaiyan*. Both as a writer and lover of the fine arts, particularly poetry and music, he possessed a fastidious and critical taste. He may be called prince of autobiographers. He bequeathed to posterity a delightful record of his activity which is full of life-like description of the countries he visited, their physical features, scenery, climate, productions, works of art, industries, condition of the people and accounts even of animals, birds, flowers and fruits. Though adorned with all the qualities needed for scholarship, Babur may be called a soldier-scholar. He was a soldier first and scholar only next. His learning and culture did not prevent him from incessant military activity, nor did they produce in him that softness which is usually associated with scholarship.

As a religious man. Babur was a staunch Sunni Muhammadan ; but he was not a religious fanatic and, unlike other orthodox Sunni rulers, did not consider it to be his duty to persecute non-Muslims. His belief in Sunni orthodoxy did not prevent him from making an alliance with Shah Ismail Safawi, the Shia ruler of Persia, who was notorious for his persecutions of the Sunnis in his dominions. He even agreed to encourage the Shia faith in Samarqand. Babur had so complete a faith in God that he has been called essentially a man of faith. He used to repeat : "Nothing happens but by the will of God. Reposing ourselves on His protection, we must go forward." He believed that God was guiding his steps. He always thanked Him for all his victories and believed that they were the results of His grace. It was difficult for him to rise above the circumstances of the age in India. He did not follow an enlightened

and liberal religious policy towards our people.[1] He declared a *holy* war (*Jihad*) against Rana Sanga and incited his men to fight against him as a religious duty. After his victory he assumed the title of *Ghazi* (slayer of the infidel). Against Medini Rai of Chanderi, too, he fought a *holy* war and behaved like a Sunni bigot. His mosque at Ayodhya was built on the spot which was revered by millions of Hindus as the birth-place of Shri Rama Chandra. He discriminated against the Hindu traders when he abolished the stamp duty for all Muslim merchants, while allowing it to remain at the old rate for the non-Muslim section of the trading community. But in fairness to him, it may be added, that his attitude towards his new subjects in this country was not as bad as that of most of the rulers of the Sultanate period.

As a soldier and general. From almost cradle to grave Babur had to fight for the safety of his life and throne and for making aggressive conquests. Thus, from his very boyhood, he was pre-eminently a soldier. He was "an admirable horseman, a fine shot, a good swordsman and a mighty hunter." Besides, he was possessed of great physical prowess and courage, spirit of adventure, contempt of death and uncommon patience and power of endurance. He was an equally good general and leader of men. Endowed with the habitual air of command, he could instinctively exact obedience from his followers and troops. Being naturally fond of the company of his soldiers and master of the kingly gift of judging human character, he made himself thoroughly understood by his men and officers and was, therefore, very popular among them. It was a matter of delight to him to suffer privations along with his troops. From his *Memoirs* we learn that during the course of one of his expeditions, he, accompanied by his men, rushed to take refuge in a small mountain cave and save himself from a terrible snow-fall. After clearing the snow with his own hands he secured a small space for himself to sit near the mouth of the cave. His men insisted that he should go inside so as to have a little comfort, but Babur would not agree as he was anxious to share the place with his troops. "I felt," writes he, "that for me to be in warm shelter and comfort whilst my men were in the snow and drift, for me to be sleeping at ease inside,

[1] The so-called Bhupal document purporting to be Babur's advice (in Persian, not in Turki) to his son Humayun to be tolerant towards the Hindus is fictitious and deserves no serious attention.

whilst my men were in misery and distress, was not a man's act, and far from comradeship. What strong man can stand I would stand ; for, as the Persian proverb says, 'In the company of friends, Death is a nuptial feast.' So I remained in the snow and wind in the hole that I had dug out, with snow four-hands thick on my head and back and ears." But though so fond of his troops he was stern when it was necessary to be so. He was a strict disciplinarian and would not allow his familiarity with his men to stand in the way of discipline. He put down disobedience and even slackness of discipline with a strong hand. He would even put those of his troops to death who were guilty of excesses. "I put some of them to death," writes he, "and slit the noses of some others and had them led about the camp in that condition." And this was to punish the troops guilty of plunder and excesses at Bhera. As a general he made a clever synthesis of the various tactics and systems of warfare that he had met with during the course of his long struggle with diverse peoples in Central Asia. He was one of the first Asian rulers to make an effective use of artillery. His generalship became responsible for splendid victories against numerically superior adversaries in this country. But Babur cannot be described as a heaven-born general like Changiz Khan or Timur, nor can he be called a fearless and chivalrous warrior of the type of Rana Sanga. In his early days Babur had seldom won a battle. He was beaten times out of number and driven out from his home-land. Despite Rushbrook Williams' eulogy, Babur had gradually become a first-rate general through a career of military defects, adventurous wanderings and contact with diverse war-like races.

As a ruler and diplomat. As is natural for a successful military leader like him, Babur displayed the qualities of a firm ruler not only at a mature age in India but also in his home-land in Trans-Oxiana. He maintained peace and discipline among his subjects. In his wide dominion, that extended from Badakhshan to the eastern boundary of Bihar, he took steps to protect his subjects from the oppression of free-booters. He kept the roads safe for communication between the principal parts of his dominions. He also saw that the local potentates did not practise tyranny over the people. His court was not only a centre of culture, but also one of rigid discipline. As a ruler he prized the welfare of his subjects and strove hard to give them protection from internal disturbances and external invasions. But he had no idea nor ability to improve the moral and material conditions

of his subjects. He was a good diplomat and the message that he sent to his uncle, Ahmad Mirza, in 1494, when he was a boy of a little over eleven years, shows that the gift was natural. Perhaps he believed that sincerity was the best diplomacy. He could make out a good case before undertaking an expedition against an opponent. Babur displayed greater diplomacy in his dealings with the people of Kabul than with his kinsmen in Farghana and Samarqand and his success in India was due, in no small measure, to his consummate diplomacy in dividing his enemies. In the words of Denison Ross "the manner in which he played off the rebellious *amirs* of Sultan Ibrahim against each other was worthy of a Machiavelli."

As an administrator. Although so successful as a soldier and conqueror, Babur was a poor administrator. He was not endowed with a constructive genius. Everywhere he allowed old and out-of-date institutions to remain and made no attempt to replace them by a new and more uptodate machinery of administration. In fact, he was incapable of doing it. In our country his activities were destructive, not constructive. The old administrative machinery of the Sultanate of Delhi had crumbled as the result of the Mughul onslaught, but Babur made no attempt to give a good system of administration to the land. He divided the territory among his chiefs and officials and entrusted to them the work of administration. Military governorships were thus set up. They were semi-independent and were held together by the only bond which was the person of the emperor. Babur's empire was, thus, as Erskine observes, "rather a congeries of little states under one prince than one regular and uniformly governed kingdom. Many of the hill and frontier districts yielded a little more than a nominal submission." Each local governor had his own system of administration and enjoyed power of life and death over the people within his jurisdiction. All that he was required to do was to assist the emperor with his contingent of troops whenever he was summoned to do so, and to remit annual revenues to the central treasury. Otherwise he was independent. Babur did not take steps to establish a common revenue system for the empire. No attempt was made to survey the land and fix a uniform demand on the basis of the actual produce of the soil. Judicial administration was also haphazard. Thus, "there was little uniformity in the political situation of the different parts of this vast empire. Hardly any law could be regarded universal but that of the un-restrained power of the prince."

Not gifted with insight into the intricacies of figures, Babur was a poor financier. He did not realize that the success of administration depended upon sound finance, and squandered away the immense wealth that he had the good luck to acquire in the treasuries of Delhi and Agra. His lavish but misplaced generosity caused a financial deficit. Even then he took another wrong step and sacrificed a large amount of revenue by remitting the stamp duty levied on Muslims just before the battle of Khanua. He realized very soon that the day-to-day administration could not be carried on without money and was obliged to impose additional taxes in order to obtain necessary equipment for the army and to pay the salaries of the troops and the civil establishment. Next, he was compelled to have recourse to impose a heavy fee on all office-holders. Every official was required to pay a certain fixed sum to the royal treasury. This produced disastrous results. Offices began to be purchased by money and merit ceased to be the criterion for government appointments. Notwithstanding these measures, financial stringency continued and his son and successor, Humayun, had to suffer from the effects of financial breakdown. Thus Babur, by reason of the limitations of his genius, had created a system of administration that could function in the time of war only. "As it was," rightly observes Rushbrook Williams, "he bequeathed to his son a monarchy which could be held together only by the continuance of war conditions ; which in times of peace was weak, structureless and invertebrate." Babur was not a little responsible for the troubles of his son, Humayun.

His place in history

As a king Babur does not occupy a prominent place in the history of his mother-land, Trans-Oxiana, from where he was driven out unceremoniously to seek shelter in Kabul. Nor is his memory cherished by the Afghans, as he carried out no useful administrative reforms in Afghanistan which posterity might associate with his name. In the history of India he would have been forgotten, if after the expulsion of his son, Humayun, the country had been lost to the Mughuls once for all. But it was fortunate that he had a grandson like Akbar who laid the foundation of the Mughul empire so deep that it took root in the soil and continued to flourish for over 200 years. It was, therefore, Akbar and not his grandfather who can be said to have been the real founder of the Mughul empire in this land. Babur only laid the first stone in the foundation of that empire. Hence his place in Indian history is that of a conqueror and of the

layer of the foundation-stone of the great Mughul empire which was re-established with a magnificent administrative super-structure by his grandson, Akbar the Great.

Babur would have been remembered and his memory cherished in the world of letters and biography, even if he had failed to conquer Hindustan and to bequeath it to his son. To the general reader it is his charming personality that is more attractive than his political achievements. His was a most interesting personality in the history of the world. He was one of those restless men "who are so active in mind and body that they are never idle and always find time for everything." In him were blended the happy and harmonious virtues of a great prince and a good man. He was so jovial, frank and bouyant in spirit that no privation, distress or misfortune could disturb the equanimity of his temper. Adventure was the very breath of his life. He was at times ferocious and even cruel, but this was but a momentary phase of his otherwise sweet, genial and affectionate disposition. "Babur is," observes Stanely Lane-Poole, "perhaps the most captivating personality in Oriental history, and the fact that he is able to impart this charm to his own *Memoirs* is not the least of his titles to fame. He is the link between Central Asia and India, between predatory hordes and Imperial government, between Timur and Akbar. The blood of the two great scourges of Asia, the Mongol and the Turk, Chingiz and Timur, mixed in his veins, and to the daring and restlessness of the nomad Tatar he joined the culture and urbanity of the Persian . . . His place in biography and in literature is determined rather by his daring adventures and persevering efforts in his earlier days, and by the delightful *Memoirs* in which he has related them. . . . The power and pomp of Babur's dynasty are gone, the records of his life—the *littera scripta* that mocks at time—remain unaltered and imperishable."

19

HUMAYUN (1530—1556)

Early life (1508—1530)

Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun was born at Kabul on March 6, 1508. His mother, Mahim Begam, who was married by Babur in 1506, was probably a Shia. As Babur had come to a settled life in Afghanistan, very good arrangements must have been made for the education of his eldest son. He learnt Turki, Arabic and Persian. But careless in spelling and style, he does not seem to have acquired scholarly precision in composition and thought. We are told that he picked up some Hindi also after Babur's conquest of northern India. Besides literature and poetry, he was interested in mathematics, philosophy, astronomy and astrology. Military training also formed part of his education. While yet a boy he was associated by his father with civil and military administration and was appointed governor of Badakhshan at the age of twenty. On the eve of the battle of Panipat he was sent to encounter one of the Afghan advance-parties under Hamid Khan. Humayun defeated Hamid Khan near Hisar Firuza. He was then eighteen and it was his first experience of battle. Subsequently he fought at Panipat and Khanua and had a number of other encounters with the Afghans. In 1526 he was assigned the district of Hisar Firuza and was, subsequently, given Sambhal in *jagir*. After the battle of Khanua he was sent to take charge of Badakhshan ; but he abandoned it after two years and returned to Agra in 1529. He was then sent to manage his *jagir* of Sambhal from where he had to be brought to Agra owing to illness. He was already the heir-apparent. While on death-bed, Babur nominated him his successor and commended him to his officers.

Accession (December 30, 1530)

Between Babur's death (26th December) and Humayun's accession (30th December) there was a four-day gap during which a conspiracy was formed to set him aside and place Mahdi Khwaja on the throne. The Prime Minister, Nizam-ud-din Ali Muhammad Khalifa, who had formed an unfavourable opinion of Humayun,

thought that the interest of the state would be better served by ignoring his claims and getting the approval of high officials to the accession of Mahdi Khwaja, who was Babur's brother-in-law and husband of the late monarch's sister, Khanzada Begum, and an experienced and competent administrator. Humayun, on the other hand, had not shown much promise, had opened some of the treasure-chests at Delhi and appropriated their contents without his father's permission and abandoned his post at Badakhshan which amounted to a dereliction of duty. Moreover, being a veteran judge of human character the Khalifa must have seen that the prince was lacking in the qualities of application and perseverance and insight into human affairs. Kamran, Askari and Hindal were rejected on the ground of young age and inexperience. The plot reached its culmination before the death of Babur. But the Khalifa changed his views before it could be executed. Nizam-ud-din Ahmad, author of the *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, whose father, Muhammad Muqim, was an eye witness to an incident that obliged the Khalifa to abandon the project of giving the throne to Mahdi Khwaja, says that after the prime minister had left the apartment of Mahdi Khwaja, the latter said to himself in a loud tone, "God willing, my first act (as king) would be to flay you and the other traitors." Muqim, who had overheard these words, reported them to the prime minister. The Khalifa thereupon abandoned the project and the conspiracy came to an end. Humayun's coronation ceremony took place on December 30, 1530.

HIS DIFFICULTIES

A. Internal

The Afghans. Humayun found the throne of Delhi a bed of thorns. The Mughul empire, which included the provinces of Balkh, Qunduz and Badakhshan in Central Asia and the Panjab, Multan, the modern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gwalior, Dholpur, Bayana and Chanderi in India, was an imperfectly reduced and ill-organized dominion. Several powerful chiefs, particularly the Afghans within the empire, had been left unsubdued. Mahmud Lodi, brother of the late Sultan Ibrahim, had not given up the ambition of recovering his ancestral throne from the Mughuls. Sher Khan Sur was on the look-out for an opportunity of welding the Afghans into a powerful community so as to carve out an independent kingdom with their assistance. Besides, there were Bibban and Bayazid who waited for

a convenient time to return and re-occupy the territory from which they had been expelled. Nusrat Shah of Bangal was actively backing up the Afghan cause. Alam Khan, who was one of the notables responsible for inviting Babur to India, was a refugee at the court of Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. Bahadur Shah supplied him with money and enabled him to collect a large army which was sent under his son, Tatar Khan, to invade Agra.

The Mirzas. Humayun's most formidable rivals were his own near relatives, specially those Timurides who claimed kinship with Babur and were styled as the Mirzas. The first of these was Muhammad Zaman Mirza. He was a grandson of Sultan Husain Baiqra of Herat and had married Humayun's half-sister, Masuma Begam. He was an experienced soldier, but a very turbulent and restless man, and so ambitious that he did not think it beyond his capacity to occupy the throne of Delhi. The next notable Mirza was Muhammad Sultan who, too, was a descendant of Timur and an aspirant for the throne of Hindustan. The third was Mahdi Khwaja, whom Babur's prime minister had marked out for succession. He had, however, missed the opportunity owing to lack of direction. Nevertheless, being the commander of a powerful division of the imperial army and a near relative of the late king, he considered himself to be equal to Humayun. There were other high officials also who were Chaghatai Turks and related to the Mughul ruling family. Being masters of large territories and powerful contingents of troops they entertained high ambitions and were desirous of setting themselves up as rivals of the new king.

His brothers. Besides the Mirzas, Humayun had his own brothers to contend with. The first among them was Kamran, who was Humayun's junior by six years. He was already in charge of Kabul and Kandhar. He cast his covetous eyes on the throne of Delhi. His next brother, Askari, was eight years younger than Humayun. The last was Hindal who was Askari's junior by two years. They too were factious, turbulent and ambitious, but they were not possessed of outstanding ability or strength of character. Lane-Poole rightly observes that being "ever weak and shifty, Askari and Hindal were dangerous only as tools for ambitious men to play upon."

Legacy from Babur. Babur was not a little responsible for Humayun's initial difficulties. He had not been able to establish a good system of administration and had taken no steps to win over

his new subjects who looked upon the Mughuls as unwelcome foreigners. The royal treasury had been exhausted by his injudicious and misplaced generosity and from its very start Humayun's administration was faced with a financial crisis. The grant of military *jagirs* had created big military chiefs who would not like to submit to the dictates of the new ruler, who, they knew, was weak and vacillating. Babur's last advice that the new king should treat his brothers well, even though they did not deserve it, kept ringing in Hunayun's ears. Being a dutiful son, he could not disregard the advice, though he had to pay dearly for trying to follow it under all circumstances. Thus Babur had left to his son a legacy which was of a precarious nature.

B. External

Among Humayun's external rivals the king of Bangal and that of Gujarat were specially noteworthy. The Bangali monarch believed that his treaty with Babur had lapsed with the latter's death. He was openly backing up the Afghans of Bihar. Bahadur Shah of Gujarat was a soldier of note and had formed the scheme of conquering Malwa and Mewar. But the greatest ambition of his life was to occupy the throne of Delhi. A consummate diplomat that he was, he entered into an understanding with the Afghans of Bihar to co-operate with him in a common endeavour for expelling the Mughuls from India.

C. Personal

At this critical juncture in the history of the Mughuls in India it was necessary that their ruler should be possessed of soliderly talent of a high order, diplomatic skill and political wisdom, and face any situation with courage and equanimity. But, though about 23 years of age, Humayun lacked all the above qualities. Although gifted with intellectual ability and fond of literature, he was devoid of military genius and strength of will. He lacked wisdom and insight into political and administrative affairs. Besides, he was not a man of application and perseverance and was wanting in the qualities of quick decision and prompt execution. In short, as Lane-Poole rightly observes, "he lacked character and resolution. He was incapable of sustained effort, and after a moment of triumph would bury himself in his *harem* and dream away the precious hours in the opium-caters' paradise, whilst his enemies were thundering at the gate. Naturally kind, he forgave when he should have punished ; light-hearted and sociable, he revelled at the table when he ought to have been in the

saddle. His character attracts but never dominates. In private life he might heve been a delightful companion ; his virtues were Christian and his whole life was that of a gentleman. But as king he was a failure." Thus Humayun was his own difficulty, and he proved to be his worst enemy.

HIS MISTAKES

Division of the empire

From the very commencement of his reign Humayun began to betray lack of decision. The first mistake he committed was to divide the empire among his brothers and cousins. Instead of keeping his brothers, who were his jealous rivals, under effective control, he made them partners in his kingdom. Sulaiman Mirza was confirmed in Badakhshan. Hindal, after his return from Badakhshan, was given in *jagir* the extensive territory of Mewat which comprised modern Alwar, the districts of Gurgaon and Mathura and part of Agra. He was sent to Alwar, its capital, at the head of a powerful contingent of troops. Askari was given the district of Sambhal in assignment. It was as extensive and populous as Mewat. Kamran, who was openly hostile, was not only confirmed in the possession of Kabul and Kandhar, but was also allowed to obtain possession by force of the Panjab and the district of Hisar Firuza. By acquiescing in the forcible seizure of the Panjab and Hisar Humayun struck at the root of the integrity of his father's empire. The transfer of the Indus region and Kabul and Kandhar to Kamran deprived him of the best recruiting ground for his army. The Mughuls used to draw their troops from Central Asia. Kamran's presence as a *de facto* ruler of Afghanistan and the Panjab cut Humayun off from contact with Central Asia and prevented him from getting recruits from beyond the Indus. By capturing Hisar, Kamran secured possession of the high road between the Panjab and Delhi. Humayun failed to appreciate the fatal consequences of the policy of a large-scale distribution of territory among military officials for which his father had been responsible. As if not content with dividing the empire among his brothers, he increased the *jagir* of everyone of his *amirs*. This encouraged insubordination among the top-ranking Mughul officials and caused him endless worry.

Expedition to Kalinjar (1531)

Within six months of his accession Humayun proceeded to besiege the fortress of Kalinjar in Bundelkhand. The ruler of the

fortress was supposed to have been in sympathy with the Afghans. The siege lasted for a few months, and Humayun was obliged to make peace and accept a huge indemnity from the raja in order to proceed hurriedly to deal with the Afghan menace in the east. The Kalinjar expedition was a mistake. The raja could not be beaten, and Humayun failed to realize his object. He could have easily been won over and converted into a friend by a tactful policy.

First expedition against the Afghans ; First siege of Chunar (1532)

Humayun had been obliged to abandon the siege of Kalinjar as the Afghans of Bihar under Mahmud Lodi were marching on the Mughul province of Jaunpur which was held by Junaid Barlas, younger brother of the prime minister, Khalifa. Junaid, who could not withstand the attack, retreated. The Afghans advanced as far as the modern town of Nawabganj in Barabanki district. Humayun had an encounter with Mahmud Lodi at Dauhria in August, 1532. The Afghans were defeated and fled back towards Bihar in confusion. Next, Humayun besieged the fortress of Chunar which was held by Sher Khan. The siege lasted for four months (September to December, 1532). Instead of conquering it, Humayun abandoned the siege and accepted from Sher Khan "a purely perfunctory submission" according to which the latter placed a contingent of Afghan troops under his son, Qutub Khan, at the disposal of the Mughul emperor. He then returned to Agra, allowing Sher Khan an opportunity to develop his resources and increase his power This was his third mistake.

Wastage of time and money (1533—1534)

Although disturbing news continued to arrive from Gujarat where Bahadur Shah was consistently following a policy of self-aggrandizement, Humayun wasted the next year and a half in feasts and festivities at Agra and Delhi. His treasury was empty, and yet he spent considerable sums of money on banquets and distribution of rewards and rich robes of honour to thousands of his vassals and officials. He wasted time and money on the grand project of building a big citadel at Delhi which he named *Din Panah*. He thus gave time to Bahadur Shah to add to his territoty and power.

War with Bahadur Shah (1535-1536) ; Conquest and loss of Malwa and Gujarat

Inspite of his conciliatory policy Humayun could not win

over Muhammad Zaman Mirza and Muhammad Sultan Mirza, who were given *jagirs* in Bihar and Kanauj respectively. To convert him into a staunch friend and supporter, Humayun confirmed Muhammad Zaman as governor of Bihar. In July 1534, the two Mirzas, in alliance with Wali Khub Mirza, broke out into rebellion; but they were defeated. Muhammad Zaman Mirza was taken prisoner and ordered to be blinded. But he managed to escape from being blinded and fled to Bahadur Shah of Gujarat (Nov. 1534). Humayun requested Bahadur Shah to deliver the prisoner back to him, which the latter refused to do. He had already given shelter to a number of Afghan enemies of the Mughul ruler, specially Alam Khan Lodi, and supported them in their design on the emperor's territory. Bahadur Shah was an ambitious ruler. He had already annexed Malwa (1531), captured the fortress of Raisen (May 1532). and besieged and defeated the Sisodia chief of Chittor (1533). He had considerably added to his military strength by raising a *corps* of musketeers and securing the services of a notable gunner, Rumi Khan of Constantinople. He was fired with the ambition of acquiring Delhi and making himself emperor of northern India. He was, therefore, not in a mood to listen to Humayun's demand. A long and acrimonius correspondence followed, ending in the declaration of war. This was inevitable, for a continued expansion of the state of Gujarat towards Rajasthan and Central India must have alarmed Humayun. Moreover, Bahadur Shah had already assisted Tatar Khan, son of Alam Khan Lodi, in equipping a powerful army and invading and capturing Bayana, which belonged to the Mughuls. Humayun was obliged to despatch his brothers, Askari and Hindal, who recovered the fortress and defeated and killed Tatar Khan at Mandrael (Nov. 1534).

Humayun now personally proceeded against Bahadur Shah, who was then conducting the second siege of Chittor. Being hard pressed, Rana Vikramaditya's mother Karameti (Karnawati) appealed to Humayun for assistance and sent him a *rakhi*, indicating that it was now his duty, as a brother, to save his sister (the Rani) from the clutches of an enemy. It is said that Humayun accepted the present and proceeded towards Chittor. But he stopped short at Sarangpur (January 1535). Bahadur Shah was alarmed; but he, correctly relying on his conviction that the Mughul ruler would follow the Muslim tradition of refraining from an attack on a brother-in-faith engaged in a war with a non-Muslim, pressed on with the siege.

He was right. Being more superstitious than political, Humayun thought it sinful to attack Bahadur Shah while he was fighting with an infidel like the Rana. This was Humayun's great blunder. He lost a splendid opportunity of winning the Rajput sympathy and support, "the inestimable worth of which was realized by his son, Akbar." Chittor fell after a heroic resistance (March 8, 1535). The women committed the fearful rite of *jauhar* and the city was given up to plunder which lasted for three days. By this time Humayun had moved on and reached near Mandasor, sixty miles from Chittor. Bahadur Shah, instead of attaking the Mughuls boldly with his victorious army, took up a defensive position and was literally besieged in his camp. His supplies ran short and he was faced with the prospect of starvation. So he fled during the night of April 25, 1535, and took shelter in the fort of Mandu.

The noise caused in Bahadur Shah's camp made the Mughuls believe that the enemy was about to launch an attack. Consequently Humayun spent the night on horse-back and his troops were kept in readiness for battle. In the morning the truth became known and a body of cavalry was sent to pursue Bahadur Shah. Humayun soon besieged the fortress of Mandu. Bahadur Shah opened negotiations. Meanwhile, some of the Mughuls climbed the city-wall and opened the gate. Thereupon, Bahadur Shah took shelter in the citadel and then fled (1st June, 1535) to Champaner, about 28 miles from Baroda. After occupying the whole of Malwa Humayun proceeded quickly to Champaner and besieged the fort. Bahadur Shah lost heart and fled (15th June, 1535) to Cambay, where he destroyed the fleet he had got together for fighting the Portuguese. From Cambay he escaped to Diu. Humayun continued the pursuit and reached Cambay, where his camp was attacked by a local chief, but the attackers were beaten and repulsed with great slaughter. From Cambay Humayun returned to Champaner (1st July) which was still in the hands of a Gujarati officer, named Ikhtiyar Khan. Speedy arrangements were made to re-invest the fortress which stood in the midst of a dense jungle. Four months passed, but the Mughuls made no progress in the siege. Fortunately, one day Humayun saw some villagers come out of the jungle and guessed that the wall on that side must be low enough to admit people in. One night, therefore, he devised a means of scaling the wall with the help of spikes which were driven into the mortar between the stones of the wall. He ordered an attack on the other parts of the fortress to continue so

as to divert the enemy's attention, and himself along with his men climbed the wall during the moon-lit night. The Gujaratis were terrified and confused and Humayun's men, taking advantage of this, captured the gate. Ikhtiyar Khan was obliged to surrender on August 6, 1535. The emperor acquired great booty, as Champaner was a repository for the Gujarati kings' treasure.

The capture of Mandu and Champaner was a great achievement. But Humayun made no arrangements to consolidate his rule, and wasted several weeks in merriment and pleasure. He squandered the large treasure that had fallen into his hands at Champaner. The administrative confusion in Gujarat enabled Bahadur Shah to send his trusted officer Imad-ul-mulk to Ahmadabad to collect revenues. Imad-ul-mulk took steps to restore the administration. He was joined by a large number of troops, and by spending money out of his collections he enlisted a powerful force. Humayun was now roused from his slumber. He sent his brother, Askari, to encounter Imad-ul-mulk. Imad-ul-mulk surprised Askari, but the latter won a victory over him. Meanwhile, Humayun had advanced to the support of his brother and captured Ahmadabad (Oct. 1535). He now appointed Askari governor of Gujarat and deputed Hindu Beg, an experienced officer, to assist him, while he himself set about to make perparations for attacking Diu where Bahadur Shah had taken shelter. But he found it impossible to undertake this task, as he received disquieting news from Malwa, where, owing to the absence of an organized administration, the Mughul troops were driven away by rebels, to Ujjain. Humayun was obliged to return to Mandu (22nd February, 1536). Here he again allowed himself to fall into sloth. Meanwhile, Gujarat again fell into confusion. His departure from there proved to be a signal of revolt. Bahadur Shah, who was in possession of a fleet, secured assistance from the Portuguese and some African slaves and recovered a number of towns from the Mughuls. Askari became nervous and neglected protection of the province and cared for his own safety only. The local Gujarati chiefs, who were dissatisfied with Mughul rule, invited Bahadur Shah to return. He collected an army and proceeded towards Ahmadabad. At this critical juncture, when Askari could not except any help from Humayun, he found his men hopelessly divided. Some of his advisers urged the desirability of declaring himself independent of Humayun in the hope that such a step would encourage his troops. Meanwhile, Bahadur Shah reached near Ahmadabad. After a slight

warfare Askari abandoned his position, and fled towards Champaner (April 1536). The loyalty of Tardi Beg, the governor of the place, foiled his plan of capturing the treasure in the Champaner fortress and declaring himself independent there. He moved on towards Agra (April 21, 1536). By this time Bahadur Shah had reached near Champaner, which obliged Tardi Beg to abandon that fortress (April 22, 1536) and retreat to Mandu with whatever treasure he could carry. Gujarat was thus lost after an occupation of a little more than a year (1535-36). Nor did Humayun think it possible to retain Malwa, as alarming news continued to reach about the disturbed state of affairs of his empire. So he quitted Mandu in the middle of May 1536 and started towards Agra where he arrived on 9th August. Thus the entire province of Malwa also was lost. It was seized by Mallu Khan, an officer in the service of the former kings of that provincial kingdom.

Contest with Sher Khan (Oct. 1537—June 1540)

(*i*) ***The Second Siege of Chunargarh (Oct. 1537—March 1528)***. Finding it futile to quarrel with Askari at a time so critical for the Mughuls, Humayun generously forgave him for his disloyalty and pretensions to sovereignty A little before Humayun's entry in Agra the habitual rebel, Muhammad Sultan Mirza, who had forcibly occupied the country from Kanauj to Jaunpur, was beaten by Hindal and driven to Bangal. Humayun stayed in Agra for a year (August 1536—July 1537) and took no notice of the rapid progress that Sher Khan Sur had been making in the eastern parts of the Mughul empire. Though he had submitted to Humayun in 1532, he had not sent any tribute to Delhi. His son, Qutub Khan, who was taken away by the emperor as a hostage, had deserted to his father along with his troops. While the emperor was engaged in his Gujarat expedition, Sher Khan had consolidated his hold on South Bihar without any opposition from the Mughuls. He had also defeated the king of Bangal in two engagements in 1534 and 1536 and had considerably added to his resources and prestige. Humayun did not realize till the rainy season of 1537 that this Afghan chief had become so formidable. He foolishly wasted one full year (August 1536—July 1537) at Agra mediating the recovery of Gujarat and Malwa and absorbing himself in the pleasures of social life, of which he was so fond. He proceeded towards Chunargarh on 27th July, 1537, after foolishly forgiving the traitorous Muhammad Zaman Mirza

who had returned from an unsuccessful attempt to stir up rebellion in the Panjab and after his failure to seize the throne of Gujarat for himself. Humayun besieged the fortress of Chunargarh which had come into the possession of Sher Khan through his marriage with Lad Malika, widow of Taj Khan, a former governor of the place. It was in the charge of his son, Qutub Khan, who withdrew a part of his troops to the neighbouring hills in order to be able to harass the besiegers. The siege lasted for six months (Oct. 1537—March 1538) and, inspite of the efforts of Rumi Khan, who had deserted his former master Bahadur Shah to join Humayun a little before the battle of Mandasor (April 1535), the fort could not be captured. He had, therefore, to resort to stratagem. An African slave boy was severely flogged and sent into the fort from where he came out within a few days after having noticed the weakness of the fortifications on the side of the river. Rumi Khan now moved his floating battery and directed his fire against the vulnerable part of the fort and effected a breach in the wall. Then he ordered an assault and captured the fort. The promise of amnesty was broken by the Mughuls who ordered the hands of several hundred Afghan gunners to be cut off. After appointing Rumi Khan commandant of the fort, Humayun decided to proceed against Sher Khan, who had by this time advanced into Bangal and almost conquered it. Though the capture of Chunar was an important military achievement, it brought no gain to the emperor, as it commanded no important land routes, and the valuable six months that were wasted in its siege gave a golden opportunity to Sher Khan to bring to a successful conclusion his expedition against Bangal and to transfer most of the treasures from Gaur to Rohtas.

(*ii*) ***Occupation of Bangal (1538).*** From Chunar Humayun proceeded to Banaras where he stayed for some time. As a result of prolonged negotiations with Sher Khan, who had not declared an open rupture with the Mughuls, it was decided that the Afghan chief should surrender Bihar and be allowed to retain possession of Bangal as a Mughul vassal on payment of an annual tribute of ten lakhs of rupees. Sher Khan accepted the terms ; but Humayun who was in correspondence with Mahmud of Bangal and had by this time proceeded as far as Maner, hesitated to ratify the treaty. He wavered between peace with Sher Khan and the prospect of conquest of Bangal on his own account. Eventually he decided in favour of the latter.

While Sher Khan's army under his general, Khawas Khan, was invading Bangal, its king, Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud, appealed to Humayun for assistance ; but, as no reinforcements reached him from any quarter, he fled to Hajipur, and his capital, Gaur, fell into Afghan hands on April 6, 1538. The fugitive Mahmud was now pursued by Sher Khan, but he escaped with his life and reached Humayun's camp at Maner and personally appealed to him for help in recovering Bangal. Humayun took pity on him, broke his recent understanding with Sher Khan, and proceeded towards Gaur. The ex-king, Mahmud, died of his wounds at Khalgaon (Kolgaon). Yet Humayun continued his march and reached Teliagarhi towards the end of May. He found the road to Gaur blocked by Jalal Khan, who had been posted by his father to defend that pass. As the Mughuls reached the place they were attacked by Jalal Khan who inflicted a considerable loss on them. A heavy storm which flooded the country prevented Humayun's advance for many days. Only after the receipt of the news that his father had transferred the Gaur treasure to Rohtas, did Jalal Khan abandon Teliagarhi and retire to join Sher Khan. Seeing that the Afghans had retreated, Humayun entered Bangal and reached Gaur (15 Aug., 1538). He found it a desolate place with its streets littered with dead bodies. Nevertheless he chose to stay there, gave the place the name of Jannatabad (abode of paradise), and wasted about eight months in frivolous pursuits. His officers and soldiers followed his example and everyone devoted himself to ease and pleasure.

The emperor had not taken any step to maintain communication with Agra or Delhi except posting Hindal at Tirhut. He had even failed to maintain contact with Banaras, which was the nearest place in the Mughul territory and was 350 miles west of Gaur. The neglect of the most elementary military precautions enabled Sher Khan to cut Humayun off from his capital. Making Jharkhand, a hilly region in South Bihar surrounded by thorny jungle, his base, he devised a masterly plan of sending troops to occupy the entire country from Teliagarhi to Kanauj. He rapidly over-ran the country and captured Banaras. His son, Jalal Khan, besieged Jaunpur and even invested Chunargarh. The Afghans captured Kara, Bahraich, Kanauj and Sambhal. Thus by the middle of January 1539, the entire country between the Kosi and the Ganga passed under the control of Sher Khan. Humayun's brother, Hindal, had already abandoned his post on north Bihar and retired to Agra where he

entertained the wild project of setting himself up as ruler. Contrary to the advice of his mother, he assumed the title of king and killed Shaikh Bahlol, for whom Humayun had great regard. When the prospect appeared dismal, the Mughul officers, who had so far concealed the news of these distressing happenings, felt alarmed and apprised Humayun of the loss of the territory. Humayun decided to return to Agra without delay. He left Jahangir Quli Beg with 5,000 men in charge of Gaur and himself began his return march towards Patna at the end of March 1539.

(*iii*) ***Battle of Chausa (June 26, 1539).*** Dividing his army into two parts, Humayun ordered Askari to take charge of the first division and proceed ahead. The second division under his personal command marched a few miles behind. At Mungir the two divisions joined, and here, contrary to the advice of his seasoned officers, Humayun crossed the Ganga to its southern bank and took the old Grand Trunk Road towards Agra. This was a great mistake. Though Humayun now had the advantage of a better road, the southern route, which lay through South Bihar, was thoroughly under Sher Khan's control. The vigilant Afghan scouts regularly communicated to their master the movements of the Mughul army. It was this blunder on the part of Humayun which enabled Sher Khan to decide upon an open contest with him. The emperor, however, could not keep to the Grand Trunk Road, and near Bihiya (in Bhojpur district) he was obliged to cross the Ganga back to its northern bank. As Humayun reached Chausa, 10 miles south-west of Baksar and a short distance from the river Karmanasa, which is the boundary between Bihar and the modern Uttar Pradesh, he received news that Sher Khan had reached the neighbourhood. His officers were for an immediate attack on the Afghans who were tired as a result of several days' journey, while Mughul troops were, comparatively, fresh. But Humayun foolishly rejected their sound advice. He, however, decided to re-cross the river to its southern bank and wait there instead of attacking the enemy at once. The delay gave Sher Khan time to fortify his camp and to give the much needed rest to his men. A large number of Afghan troops gathered under his banner. On the contrary, Humayun received no help from his brothers, Hindal who was openly acting as king at Agra, and Askari who too harboured treasonable designs. Many of his troops deserted him on account of disease, hardship and fear of the enemy. But there was no escape ; Sher Khan had blocked the road to Agra and

the sword alone could settle their dispute. The antagonists, however, lay facing each other for three months (April to June 26, 1539), but neither of them took up the offensive. Sher Khan purposely delayed the contest, as he felt that the coming of the rainy season would hamper the Mughuls and give him a decided advantage over them. During the period there was an interchange of envoys for a peaceful settlement ; but Sher Khan who had a bitter experience of Humayun's breach of agreement about a year before, did not believe in the Mughul *bonafides* and used the time to put the enemy off his guard. The Afghan chief showed his hand as soon as the rains set in. The Mughul encampment, which stood on the low land between the Ganga in the north and the Karmanasa in the west, was flooded, causing confusion and indiscipline among its ranks. Sher Khan deluded the Mughuls by signing a treaty and sending his troops to fight the Cheros. On 25th June, 1539, he marshelled his troops and gave out that he was proceeding to attack Maharatha Chero who was the chief of an aborginal tribe in the Shahabad district of Bihar. The news put the Mughuls off their guard, as Sher Khan actually proceeded five miles in the direction of the Chero territory ; but after this he took a turn eastward, crossed the river unperceived some five miles below Humayun's camp and riding due north returned after mid-night and made a surprise attack on the Mughuls who were asleep in their camps. The Afghan army, which was divided into three divisions under Sher Khan, his son Jalal Khan, and his greatest general Khawas Khan respectively, attacked the Mughuls from three directions. Consternation fell upon the imperialists. The tumult aroused Humayun who sprang on a horse and tried to collect his men. But most of his troops had already dispersed and fled to save themselves. Humayun failed to reach his tent, but he was conducted out of danger by a few of his trusted followers. He could not cross the Ganga on an elephant and was obliged to make use of an inflated skin (*mashak*) of a water-carrier (Nizam) to reach the other bank in safety. His entire camp, including many of the ladies of his *harem*, fell into the hands of Sher Khan. Almost the whole of the Mughul army was annihilated. Humayun himself, attended by a few men, fled towards Agra.

In the battle fell eight thousand Mughul troops and a number of Mughul notables, including the restless Muhammad Zaman Mirza. Two of Humayun's queens and one daughter were either killed or drowned. His chief queen, Bega Begam, along with many other

Mughul ladies, was taken prisoner. Sher Khan made all arrangements for their protection and, subsequently, sent them back to Humayun under an escort.

(*iv*) ***The Battle of Bilgram*** (***May 17, 1540***). At Agra all the brothers met and held prolonged discussions about the measures to be adopted against their enemy, who, flushed with his recent victory, had ascended the throne and assumed the title of Sher Shah. Kamran, who had come to the Mughul capital during Humayun's absence and was actuated by selfish motives, offered to undertake an expedition aginst the Afghan ruler with his 20,000 fresh troops from the Panjab ; but Humayun, aware of his designs, rejected the offer, specially as its acceptance would have brought a slur on his position as the head of the Mughul ruling family. Inspite of the imminent danger of losing all they possessed and the earnest endeavour of Mirza Haider Dughlat, Babur's cousin, to compose their differences, the brothers did not agree to unite. Kamran foolishly believed that if he refrained from co-operating with his elder brother he would be allowed by Sher Shah to remain unmolested in his possessions of the Panjab and Hisar Firuza. Moreover, he imagined, though not without insufficient ground, that his illness at Agra, from which he was suffering at the time, was due to the poison administered to him at the instance of Humayun. Askari felt that Humayun lacked in requisite firmness and, therefore, became indifferent. In these abortive discussions, much valuable time was wasted, and Sher Shah, whose first work after the battle of Chausa was to occupy the whole of Bangal and annihilate the troops left by Humayun at Gaur, had now returned to the west and was rapidly approaching Agra at the head of a powerful body of troops. His men had already occupied Lucknow and Kanauj and he himself now reached the latter place (February 1540). No time was, therefore, to be lost. Kamran, inspite of the entreaties of his brother, refused to lend his army and returned to Lahore with most of his troops. A feverish attempt was now made to get together fresh troops besides those that had reached Agra from the wreck of Chausa and their number reached 90,000. But most of these were raw recruits who had no experience of battle. With this motley crowd Humayun proceeded to meet the enemy and reached Bhojpur near Kanauj, and set up his encampment there. Sher Shah, who had already arrived, pitched his camp on the other side of the Ganga opposite Kanauj at a distance of about 23 miles from Humayun's encampment. Humayun's troops continued to

swell ; their number reached two lakhs. One month (April 1540) passed, neither side taking the offensive. The only activity displayed by Humayun was to cross the Ganga to the side of the town of Bilgram. He encamped at a distance of 3 miles from the Ganga and near Bilgram.

On may 15 there was a heavy shower of rain which swamped the Mughul camp. It was, consequently, decided to shift the encampment to a higher spot in the neighbourhood. As the Mughuls issued out of their camp to make a demonstration on 17th May, 1540, as preparatory to the shifting of their camp which was fixed for the following day, Sher Shah ordered his men to take the field and launch an attack on the enemy. He thus cleverly deprived Humayun of the use of his heavy guns. Moreover, the Mughuls, who were not yet ready for battle, were taken by surprise. Humayun had already appointed Mirza Haider his generalissimo under whose direction the Mughul troops were quickly marshalled in battle array. Humayun and Mirza Haider commanded the centre. The left wing, which was near the river, was placed under Hindal, while the right wing was commanded by Yadgar Nasir Mirza. Askari led the advance guard. The front was stiffened by 5,000 matchlockmen. There was no reserve and no flanking parties. The effective fighting strength of the Mughuls was 40,000.

Though Mirza Haider estimated the strength of the Afghan army at 15,000, the total number of combatants under Sher Shah could not have been less than 40,000. He divided his army into seven divisions taking his stand at the centre which was protected by a trench. Besides a reserve, he posted flanking parties to the extreme right and left of his wings. In order to take the Mughuls by surprise and to cut them off from the river and their base, he ordered an attack on Humayun's left wing. Hindal, who commanded the left wing, aquitted himself creditably in the initial stage of the battle and wounded Jalal Khan ; but Sher Shah sent timely reinforcement to assist his son who now took up the offensive with vigour. The vanguards of the armies also came into clash and Askari was repelled by the Afghans. As the heavy Mughul guns could not be drawn to the battle-ground in the hurry of the contest, the Mughul artillery played no part. Mirza Haider had to record : "Not a cannon was fired—not a gun. The artillery was totally useless." The Afghan attack was so vigorous that the Mughul troops, whose movement was impeded by the presence of unruly camp-followers, began to flee and Humayun's efforts

to rally them came to nothing. He was, therefore, compelled to quit the field and flee to Agra. He crossed the river with difficulty. Vast number of his men were drowned in the Ganga and he had only a small band of followers left. On the way his small party was attacked by the people of Bhogaon in Mainpuri district, and he could reach Agra with difficulty.

(*v*) ***Humayun, a fugitive (1540).*** Agra could not afford the fugitive king a safe asylum for long, as news came that a party of Afghans was following him. Humayun, therefore, abandoned the city and hurried on to Lahore, crossing the swollen rivers of the Panjab with difficulty. Hardly had he reached Lahore when news came that the Afghans had occupied Agra and Delhi without resistance. Humayun's brothers met him at Lahore, but once again failed to offer a united front against their common enemy. Kamran, anxious to retain the Panjab and Afghanistan, showed no inclination to incur the displeasure of Sher Shah by assisting Humayun. Meanwhile, Sher Shah reached the Panjab itself and contemptuously rejected the ex-emperor's request to allow Sarhind to be the boundary between their two dominions. There was no alternative except flight. Humayun was torn between Mirza Haider's advice that he should withdraw to Kashmir and conquer Hindustan from there and that of Hindal and Yadgar Mirza who suggested retreat through Sindh to Gujarat and the invasion of Delhi from there. While these futile discussions were going on, it was discovered that Kamran was in treacherous correspondence with Sher Shah to whom he offered assistance if he were left in possession of the Panjab and Kabul. This broke up their meeting, and Humayun decided to accept Mirza Haider's sound suggestion of proceeding to Kashmir; but, as Kamran prepared to obstruct his passage to Kashmir by force of arms, he had to abandon the project. Hindal also deserted him and proceeded to invade Sindh. Humayun now made another attempt to proceed to Kashmir, which too, was foiled by the traitorous Kamran who again made a military demonstration against his fugitive brother. Nor could Humayun proceed to Badakhshan as Kamran's treacherous conduct had prepared him to suspect that Kamran would seize Kabul also. Thus for the third time Kamran prevented his brother from carving out a new kingdom for himself. Humayun was now compelled to proceed towards Sindh and join Hindal (December 1540). Near Khushab, there was again an ugly prospect of a quarrel with Kamran who wanted to be the first to pass through a defile in the Salt Range.

But the trouble was averted by the intervention of a holy man. After this incident Humayun took his way towards Sindh and began his march through the most inhospitable part of the country.

Causes of Humayun's expulsion

It is convenient at this place to examine the causes of Humayun's expulsion from his dominion. Although he had inherited from his father a precarious throne and an empty treasury under circumstances that would have caused considerable headache even to an abler and far-sighted administrator, all his initial difficulties could have been overcome by a wise and statesman-like policy. The circumstances responsible for his deposition must therefore be considered to have been very largely the result of his own failings. In the first place, Humayun began badly by foolishly dividing his kingdom among his unworthy and treacherous brothers, though the supreme need of the hour was a unified and central control of even the widest parts of the nascent and far-flung Mughul empire which, in its very infancy, had to contend with numerous enemies, internal as well as external. The accession of Kabul and the Panjab to the hostile Kamran cut Humayun off from the main recruiting ground of his army and sapped the very foundation of his power which was based on military force. Secondly, instead of devising constructive measures of consolidation and reform in order to win over his subjects, which was so essential in the interest of his dynasty and kingdom, the emperor, right from the beginning of his reign, launched a policy of aggressive warfare. His expedition against the Chandel ruler of Kalinjar was un-called for. Even if the raja was in sympathy with the Afghans, which is, however, doubtful he could have been easily won over by a policy of tact and generosity. As it was, Humayun's failure before the strong fort of Kalinjar brought him little prestige even though the raja agreed to pay a huge war indemnity. Thirdly, Humayun failed to understand and appreciate the enormous accession in the power and prestige of Sher Khan. He seems to have believed till as late as the early months of 1539 that the Afghan chief was a mere upstart and could easily be brought round. The emperor did not make a sustained effort to root out Sher Khan. He foolishly made a perfunctory peace with him after the first siege of Chunar in 1532 and permitted him to retain that fortress. A wise ruler would have followed up his early success (August 1532) and would have concentrated his power and attention on the extermination of the

Afghans before taking up any other military campaign. Fourthly, Humayun failed to see that there was an understanding between Bahadur Shah of Gujarat and Sher Khan of South Bihar to the effect that while the emperor was busy against one, the other should create strife so as to divert Humayun's attention. That was probably why he wasted much time in frivolous feasts and pleasure parties at Agra and Delhi and squandered his already depleted treasury on banquets, distribution of rewards to his followers and building projects, all of which he supervised personally. Fifthly, in his belated campaign against Bahadur Shah of Gujarat he committed numerous blunders which not only brought about the loss of his recent conquests of Malwa and Gujarat but foretold his future disgrace and downfall. He should have boldly attacked Bahadur Shah while the latter was engaged in a death struggle with the Rajputs of Chittor. This would have brought not only an immediate collapse of Bahadur's power and saved Humayun from a prolonged campaign in western India, but would have also won for the emperor the sympathy and support of the Rajputs. It was unfortunate that after the conquest of Malwa and Gujarat Humayun wasted many weeks in idle pleasures at Mandu which gave Bahadur an opportunity to send his men from Diu to recover a large part of Gujarat. The emperor established no civil administration in the conquered provinces. His brother, Askari, would not have played false to him at Ahmadabad, if proper arrangements had been made for consolidating the Mughuls hold over Gujarat, by establishing military garrisons in various parts and giving the land a wise and generous revenue administration. In the absence of these measures, the temporary Mughul rule in Malwa and Gujarat was like a military occupation of the land and bound to collapse in the event of any military set-back. Sixthly, Humayun's next expedition against Sher Khan was undertaken in the same haphazard fashion. He had no well-thought-out scheme of action either against Bahadur Shah or against Sher Khan. He wasted six precious months in the reduction of Chunargarh, whose occupation was immaterial, as it did not command important land routes. Moreover, the time gave Sher Khan an opportunity to conquer Gaur and to transfer its treasure to Rohtasgarh. Next, Humayun hesitated whether to stop short of the conquest of Chunargarh or to proceed against Sher Khan. He never really decided whether to conquer Bangal or to root out Sher Khan's power in Bihar. On proceeding to Gaur he again fell into sloth and pleasures and wasted more than eight months

during which Sher Khan, who was a master of strategy, not only cut off the imperial communications with Agra, but occupied the country from Teliagarhi to Kanauj. One fails to imagine that there could be any monarch who would not receive news from his capital for eight months and yet think that all was safe. During his return march to Agra he displayed vacillation which was unworthy of a ruler of men. He did not know which way to take. He crossed the Ganga thrice and played into the hands of Sher Khan. At Chausa he committed the same blunder of not attacking Sher Khan while he was reported to be proceeding against the Hindu Cheros, as he had done while Bahadur Shah was besieging Chittor. Seventhly, after his defeat at Chausa in June 1539, he took no steps to recover from Sher Khan's hands his territory from Kanauj to Banaras and remained on the defensive at Agra. He treated the eastern parts of his empire as lost. The effect of this policy on the people must have been injurious to the extreme, and, in their eyes, Humayun's fate must have been sealed. Eighthly, he failed to keep together a force of experienced troops with which to fight the victorious Sher Khan and committed grievous mistakes at the battle of Kanauj. His choice of the low land for his encampment, his inaction on the field for two months, his faulty arrangement to shift his encampment to a better place, and, finally, his leaving his heavy artillery behind at the time of engagement and not preventing the stampede created by the crowding of the enormous number of non-combatants in his army were enough to account for his discomfiture and flight. Ninthly, all through his ten years' rule, he displayed lack of leadership and capacity to control his officers and troops. His generals and commanders rebelled again and again at critical moments in his fortune, feeling sure that their master would forgive them if it became necessary for them to revert to his service. Tenthly, his clemency towards his unworthy brothers was not a little responsible for his downfall. All the three of them rebelled, and sometime or other assumed the insignia of royalty, and caused almost endless worry ; but Humayun forgave them times out of number. Had he made them an example when they first became guilty of disloyalty, the troubles of his reign would not have occurred. Finally, as we have already seen, Humayun was incapable of concentrated effort. His habit was to show military activity and attain some success and then to fall into sloth and pleasures, and emerge from his slumber and, after an interval, fall into it again. This habit of working by fits and starts and burying himself in the *harem* or

revelling at the table when he should have been in the saddle must be considered to be one of the foremost causes of his failure.

Humayun in exile (1541—1555); Birth of Akbar (Oct. 15, 1542)

Passing through great privations during his journey from Khushab, Humayun reached Rohri on the left bank of the Indus and not far from the island fortress of Bhakkar. The place was included in the kingdom of Sindh whose ruler was Shah Husain Arghun. Humayun besieged the fortress, while Hindal and Yadgar Mirza proceeded to capture Sehwan. The siege lingered on and the Mughuls had to suffer from acute distress, as Shah Husain had laid waste the country round Bhakkar so as to prevent Humayun from obtaining supplies. Disgusted with his brother's inactivity, Hindal besieged Sehwan and Humayun proceeded to join him there. While in Hindal's camp in 1541 he chanced to see Hamida Begam, the daughter of Hindal's spiritual preceptor, Mir Baba Dost *alias* Mir Ali Akbar Jami, who was a Persian Shia. He expressed his desire to marry her. Hindal took great offence at the proposal, as he looked upon the girl as his sister. Hamida Banu herself, then a girl of 14, showed great reluctance to marry the ex-king as, she said, her hand could hardly reach his collar. The ladies of the *harem*, however, successfully persuaded her and their marriage took place on August 29, 1541. Soon after Humayun had to return to Bhakkar and Hindal left for Kandhar. The fugitive emperor now made preparation to attack Thatta, Shah Husain's capital, but had to return from the way to re-besiege Sehwan. Anxious to sow dissension among the imperialists, Shah Husain won over Yadgar Nasir Mirza by promising him his daughter in marriage and his assistance in conquering Gujarat. In view of the successful diplomacy of the ruler of Sindh, Humayun had once again to abandon the siege of Sehwan and retreat towards Bhakkar. He found Yadgar Mirza absolutely hostile and, being despaired of his future, he talked of withdrawing himself from the world and going on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

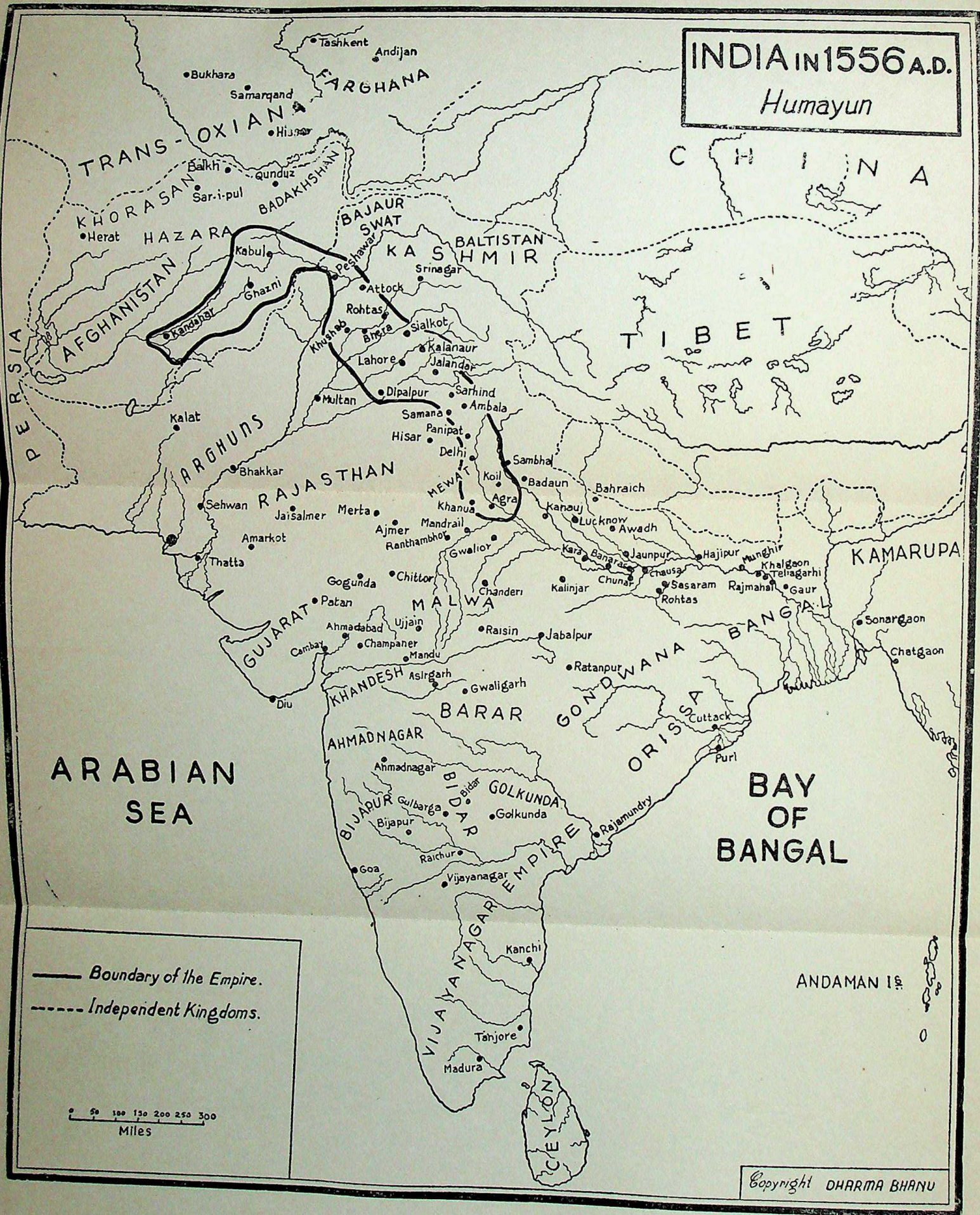
At this time he decided to accept an invitation from Maldeva of Marwar who had promised him assistance about a year back. Accordingly, Húmayun started for Jodhpur ; but, as he reached the vicinity of the capital of Marwar, he found that Maldeva had changed his attitude and wanted to arrest and deliver him to Sher Shah who had probably written to the raja to do him that service. So he retraced his steps back to Sindh suffering unspeakable hardship and

privation on the way during the hottest season in the desert of Rajasthan. On one occasion his men had to march for three days without water and when they reached a well many of his horses and men drank so much that they died. He took shelter with the Rana of Amarkot, a small state of Sodha Rajputs, in Sindh (August 22, 1542), who offered him hospitality and help with men and money to conquer the south-eastern part of Sindh. Rana Virasala (not Prasad as is wrongly supposed by many writers) allowed the Mughul ladies to be lodged in his palace fort. In October, Humayun proceeded to conquer Sindh with the help of Rana Virasala and he had covered about 15 miles when he received the happy news of the brith of a son at Amarkot. The baby was the future Akbar the Great. Humayun gave him the name of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar. He was at this time in such a destitute condition that he could not celebrate the occasion with befitting splendour and give presents to his nobles. He failed to capture Sindh either. What was worse, he lost the support of his new ally, as his haughty followers picked a quarrel with Rana Virasala's men. But, fortunately, Shah Husain, desirous of getting rid of the embarrassing presence of a hungry invader, offered him a passage through his country to Kandhar and provided him with supplies and money for the journey. So Humayun now quitted India for good. But Kamran, who was ruling as an independent king with Askari as governor of Kandhar on his behalf, sent a force to obstruct his passage and arrest him. Humayun had a narrow escape and was obliged to leave behind his infant son, Akbar, then aged about one year, in the hurry of his flight. Avoiding Kandhar, he reached Persia, where Shah Tahmasp offered him a splendid reception. But the bigoted ruler of Iran wanted his guest to conform to the Shia faith and used veiled threats of violence if he refused to comply with his demand. Humayun bore the humiliating treatment with patience. At last, in 1544, the Shah assisted him with an army on the condition that he should become a Shia, encourage that religion in his territories and return Kandhar to Iran in the event of his successful acquisition of that fortress. At the head of this army Humayun reached Kandhar, defeated Askari and captured the fort. Askari was forgiven and Kandhar was made over to the Persians. But on the death of the Persian Shah Humayun re-occupied Kandhar and set out to besiege Kabul. Kabul was occupied and he met his two-year old son in November 1544. Kamran fled to Ghazni and from there to Sindh.

The successful occupation of Kandhar and Kabul gave Humayun a footing in Afghanistan, but the days of his trouble were not yet over. Taking advantage of Humayun's illness during an expedition to the country beyond the Hindukush, Kamran surprised Kabul and took possession of it in 1546. Many of Humayun's men now deserted him to join Kamran, fearing that he would massacre their families in Kabul. On recovery from illness, Humayun besieged Kabul. It is said that Kamran exposed the infant Akbar on the city rampart to the fire of Humayun's guns. But the siege was pressed with vigour and Kabul re-captured in 1547, Kamran fleeing away to escape punishment. He returned and fought again with his brother, but was again defeated and had to submit (1548). Humayun again forgave him and appointed him governor of the country north of the Oxus. In 1549, Kamran once again played false to his brother and actually re-occupied Kabul. Humayun, who was severely wounded in the battle with his brother, had to take refuge in a secluded place and was even believed to have died. With the help of Sulaiman of Badakhshan, he, however, took the field again, defeated Kamran and took possession of Kabul. Kamran, who fled and escaped to take shelter with Islam Shah (1545-1553) in our country, was captured and surrendered to Humayun, who, inspite of the advice of his nobles to put him to death, forgave his brother, but ordered him to be blinded. Kamran was now abandoned by his followers and, accompanied by his faithful wife, he started on a pilgrimage to Mecca where he died in 1557. Humayun's other brothers had already disappeared. After his last battle with Kamran, Askari was taken prisoner and sent on to Mecca from where he never returned. Hindal was killed in a night attack by an Afghan. Thus Humayun was free from his dangerous rivals who had been an important cause of his expulsion and misery.

Restoration of Humayun

During his exile, his great rival Sher Shah, who had expelled him from India and established a vast and powerful empire strengthened by a wise system of administration, had died in May 1545. He was succeeded by his son, Islam Shah, who maintained Sher Shah's admirable policy of cherishing the well-being of the people, but could not keep his Afghan nobles in check. When he died a premature death on 30th October, 1553, the Afghan empire was well on the way to decay. His twelve-year old son was murdered by the boy's maternal uncle, Mubariz Khan, who set himself up as king


INDIA IN 1556 A.D.
Humayun
Tashkent
Andijan
FARGHANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
TRANS-OXIAN
Hissar
Balkh
Qunduz
Sar-i-pul
KHORASAN
BADAKHSHAN
CHINA
Herat
HAZARA
Kabul
BAJAUR
SWAT
Peshawar
KASHMIR
BALTISTAN
Srinagar
Ghazni
Attock
Rohtas
Kandahar
AFGHANISTAN
Khushab
Bhera
Sialkot
Kalanaur
Lahore
Jalandar
TIBET
PERSIA
Multan
Dipalpur
Sarhind
Ambala
Kalat
Samana
Panipat
Hisar
ARGHUNS
Delhi
Sambhal
Bhakkar
MEWAT
Koil
Badaun
Bahraich
RAJASTHAN
Sehwan
Khanua
Agra
Kanauj
Jaisalmer
Merta
Lucknow
Awadh
Mandrail
Ajmer
Amarkot
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Kara
Banaras
Jaunpur
Hajipur
Munghir
KAMARUPA
Thatta
Khalgaon
Telliagarhi
Chausa
Gogunda
Chittor
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Chunar
Sasaram
Rajmahal
Gaur
Rohtas
Patan
GUJARAT
MALWA
BANGAL
Ahmadabad
Ujjain
Raisin
Jabalpur
Sonargaon
Cambay
Champaner
Mandu
Chatgaon
Ratanpur
KHANDESH
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Diu
BARAR
GONDWANA
ORISSA
Cuttack
AHMADNAGAR
Puri
Ahmadnagar
ARABIAN SEA
BIDAR
GOLKUNDA
BIJAPUR
Gulbarga
Bidar
Golkunda
Bijapur
Rajamundry
BAY OF BANGAL
Raichur
Goa
Vijayanagar
EMPIRE
Kanchi
ANDAMAN Is.
VIJAYANAGAR
Tanjore
Madura
CEYLON
Boundary of the Empire.
Independent Kingdoms.
50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
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under the title of Muhammad Adil Shah, popularly known as Adil. This man was fond of ease and sensual pleasures. Being averse to dull details of administration, he left the charge of affairs in the hands of his Hindu minister, Hemu, and himself retired to Chunar. Adil Shah's authority was challenged by two members of the Sur ruling family, named Ibrahim Shah and Sikandar Shah, who fought a number of fiercely-contested battles among themselves. The break-up of the Afghan empire, created by the valour, wisdom and statesmanship of Sher Shah, was thus only a question of time. Humayun was watching the distracted condition of our country and was eagerly awaiting an opportunity to return and make a bid for the recovery of his lost dominion. The opportunity came within a year of Islam Shah's death. A believer in astrology, one day he took omen from the names of the first three men he met, which was reinforced by another omen taken from the poems of Hafiz. They were so favourable as to confirm his decision to embark on the re-conquest of Hindustan. As he had got rid of the embarrassing presence of his faithless brothers and consolidated his position in Afghanistan, there was nothing to hinder his projected enterprise. Preparations were quickly made, and leaving Kabul he reached Peshawar on December 25, 1554. When he crossed the Indus he was joined by Bairam Khan, the most faithful of his officers, and by many other commanders from Kandhar. Negotiations had been going on with the Gakkhar chief, Sultan Adam, for securing his co-operation and assistance, but the latter, who had already entered into an alliance with Sikandar Shah Sur, declined the offer. Proceeding by way of Parhala, Humayun reached Kalanaur, in the Gurdaspur district in East Panjab. Here he divided his army into three divisions, sending one under Saihab-ud-din Khan to Lahore, and a second one under Bairam Khan and some other chiefs against Nasib Khan, an Afghan, who held Hariana. Lahore was occupied without resistance and Humayun reached the place a few days later (February 24, 1555) and made arrangements for the administration of the town and the district. Next, Dipalpur was occupied in March after a fierce fighting with Shahbaz Khan Afghan. At about the same time Bairam Khan occupied the pargana of Hariana after driving away Nasib Khan. He then marched to Jalandar. From Jalandar, Bairam Khan and some other notable Mughuls proceeded to Machhiwara on the Sutlaj, 19 miles east of Ludhiana. Here a tough battle was fought between the Mughuls and the Afghans who

were under the command of Nasib Khan, Tatar Khan and some other notable chiefs, on May 15, 1555, and lasted till past mid-night. Fortunately, a fire broke out near the Afghan camp which made it possible for the Mughuls to see the disposition of the Afghan troops and to make them a sure target of their guns and arrows. Inspite of their desperate resistance, the Afghan ranks broke up in the early hours of the morning and fled from the field. Bairam Khan quickly made arrangements for the occupation of Sarhind.

The battle of Machhiwara enabled the Mughuls to occupy almost the whole of the Panjab. This frightened Sikandar Sur, one of the three Sur kings who claimed supremacy in Hindustan. He collected eighty thousand troops and advanced from Delhi on April 27, 1555, to recover Sarhind. As the contest was likely to be fateful, Humayun, in response to Bairam Khan's request, proceeded from Lahore to join his troops. A sanguinary conflict now took place near Sarhind on 22nd June, 1555. The Mughuls were at first frightened by the imposing army of Sikandar which was headed by mountain-like elephants. But Bairam Khan's generalship enabled them to emerge victorious. Sikandar, too, was repulsed. He escaped to Mankot and from there to the hills of the north-western Panjab. After this memorable victory, Humayun entered Sarhind and from there proceeded to Samana where he spent a few days. Then he advanced to Delhi where he reached on July 20, 1555. He entered the city at an auspicious moment on 23rd July and re-occupied the throne of Delhi after an interval of about 15 years. The emperor had already sent a small force from Sarhind to pursue Sikandar Sur. He now appointed his young son, Akbar, who a little time before had been designated heir-apparent, governor of the Panjab, with Bairam Khan, his tutor, to assist him. This step was necessary in order to put down Sikandar Sur whose army had swelled and who was carrying on depredations in the Panjab. Ali Quli Khan Shaibani was despatched to Badaun to suppress a local rebel, named Qambar Beg, which task he performed without much difficulty. Arrangements were made for the occupation of Agra and the adjoining districts. Thus, within a few months, Humayun recovered a considerable part of the territory which had once been under his sway.

Last days and death

The magnitude of the task before the restored monarch was great. He had recovered only a part of his dominion. Even in the

limited territory under his control there were a number of disaffected chiefs, mostly Afghans, who had to be subdued. The most difficult work was that of establishing a sound system of administration and winning the sympathy of the people. Humayun engaged himself in the work of putting down refractory chiefs and of making arrangements for the restoration of the Mughul authority; but he took no steps to revive the sound administrative machinery of the time of Sher Shah which had partly been broken down owing to the factious fights of his successors and partly due to the Mughul invasions of India. His end was approaching fast. On the evening of 24th January, 1556, he was sitting on the roof of his library situated in that group of the building known as *Din Panah* and was subsequently called *Sher Mandal.* He was talking to some of his distinguished nobles and astrologers and it was arranged to hold a *darbar* at the time of the appearance of the planet Venus. At this time he heard the *Muazzin's* call to prayer from the neighbouring mosque. So he got up in order to descend the steep stairs and go to attend the evening prayer. His staff slipped and he fell down the stairs and fractured his skull. He was then carried to the palace. On recovering consciousness he learnt that his condition was serious and so sent a message to his son, Akbar, informing him of his condition and appointing him his successor. He died on January 26, 1556. Thus, as Lane-Poole writes, "Humayun tumbled through life, and he tumbled out of it."

Character

There are no two opinions about Humayun as a gentleman. All the modern as well as contemporary historians agree that as a man his character left little to be desired. He was an extremely dutiful son, never hesitating in carrying out his father's commands both in the latter's life-time and after his death. Babur's last words of advice kept ringing in his ears and he so faithfully obeyed them that he risked his throne and his very life more than once in order not to do to his unworthy brothers any harm even though they deserved it. He was equally devoted to his mother, Mahim Begam, and was very affectionate to his numerous relatives, male and female. Though polygamous, he was passionately attached to his wives and he loved his children, particularly Akbar, as dearly as any father could ever do. Despite constant rebellions on the part of his near relatives and kinsmen like Muhammad Zaman Mirza and Muhammad Sultan Mirza and their numerous progeny, he sincerely forgave them again and again and appointed them to places of emolument, trust and responsibility.

Like his father, he freely associated with his officials and servants and tried to share their joys and sorrows. He was fond of the company of learned men with whom he discoursed on diverse subjects of cultural and religious interests. A man of scholarly taste and well-versed in Turki and Persian literatures, philosophy, mathematics and astronomy, besides Muslim theology, he gathered round him scholars of repute and extended to them whatever patronage he could. It must, however, be noted that as a scholar Humayun was not so exact and precise as Babur. He was a little careless in his spelling and style and seems to have been also fond of rhetorical and ambiguous language. This habit seems to have stuck to him till very late in life. Nevertheless, he was a thoroughly cultured gentleman, very polite and attentive in conversation and quite charming in manners and elegant in bearing. As Farishta writes, he was "of elegant stature and of a bronze complexion. The mildness and benevolence of Humayun's character were excessive, if there can be excess in such noble qualities." He "possessed the virtues of charity and munificence in a very high degree."

Humayun was a sincere Musalman, though not of the orthodox Sunni type, and was regular in the observance of the five daily prayers and other rites of his religion. Like his father, he was free from sectarian bigotry and cherished little ill-will towards the Shias. His chief queen, Hamida Banu Begam, was a Shia and so also his most faithful and best servant, Bairam Khan. Contrary to the practice of the age, he refused to indulge in the persecution of heresy in Islam and conformed, while in Persia, to the practices of the Shia religion, though not without considerable reluctance and mental reservation. But as far as his relations with the Hindus were concerned, he did not rise above the standard of the age. Notwithstanding the so-called advice of Babur in the fictitious Bhupal document to extend complete religious toleration to the Hindus and to prohibit cow slaughter, Humayun acted like a sultan of the pre-Mughul age in regard to the religion of the vast majority of his Hindu subjects. He displayed definite partiality for his co-religionists and although it proved to be highly injurious to his interests, he always refused to attack a brother-in-faith engaged in war with the Hindus. He demolished temples at Kalinjar and did not refrain from hurting the susceptibility of the Hindus. But he was not a bitter persecutor and he followed no systematic policy of repression of Hinduism.

Endowed with considerable physical prowess, Humayun was

not a bad soldier. He was courageous in battle and often risked his life on the field. Very patient in times of crisis, he could endure any amount of fatigue and hardship and even suffering. He was a noted strategist; but he could not be compared with his father or his rival, Sher Shah. He was not a good general and was not possessed of the personal magnetism of a great leader of men. Those very officers and troops who followed Babur from victory to victory and were held in thraldom to his will revolted again and again against Humayun. The Mughul army, which had proved its undoubted superiority in the time of Babur, became a weak instrument of force and was torn by dissension throughout the reign of Humayun who failed to make proper use of the Mughul system of fighting and to inspire his troops to action. As a commander, he hardly took advantage of the weakness and difficulties of his opponents and invariably gave them an opportunity to get together the sinews of war against him.

Nor could Humayun be called a good administrator or even ruler. Positively lacking in constructive statesmanship, he could never think of establishing a sound system of administration in the territories under his control. It is sometimes presumed that he had little time to introduce administrative reforms, but that is a fallacious view. Before his deposition and expulsion he ruled for almost ten years during which he did next to nothing to improve the moral, social and even material condition of the people. The truth is that he had no ability and aptitude for a work of this type. After his restoration during about one year's rule he made no preliminary arrangement to revive the good institutions of Sher Shah's time. The few regulations that he devised during his reign were puerile. The division of his nobility and officials into three classes, entitled the *Ahl-i-Daulat*, the *Ahl-i-Saadat* and *Ahl-i-Murad*, was arbitrary and meaningless and served no useful administrative purpose. According to another writer, he classified his official hierarchy into 12 divisions, each class being indicated by an arrow, which was even more fanciful. Another innovation was his dressing himself in different coloured robes each day of the week ; for example, on Sunday he would put on yellow dress, on Saturday black, on Monday white and so on. This seems to have been based on some astronomical consideration, but had no connection with administration. A number of other fanciful innovations are on record in the pages of the contemporary works, but no writer ascribes to him any solid reform in the field of revenue or any other administrative branch. His main faults as a ruler were the facts that

he had no well-thought-out scheme for anything and had the habit of abandoning a project and undertaking a new one without bringing the first one to a successful conclusion. In fact, the dull details of government repelled him. Though it may sound strange, yet it is a fact that Humayun as a ruler lacked the sense of responsibility. His conception of kingship differed radically from that of Sher Shah who believed that a ruler's main duty was to further the interests of his subjects. Humayun could not maintain discipline among his officials and troops and as a ruler he could not expect from them that obedience which his father, Babur, easily did and without which no government could be carried on successfully. His besetting sin was his indolence and his habit of falling into sloth and pleasures at intervals. Next to it were his indecision and lack of balance and proportion. He would waver long between opposing courses of action and he went to the extent of placing the ever-bearer, Nizam, who had saved his life at Chausa, on his throne for a day. His considerable natural talent was greatly undermined by his addiction to opium and by sensual indulgence. His over-generosity and leniency towards his brothers and relatives, whom he forgave again and again, proved to be impediments in the way of orderly and disciplined government.

Though his name was Humayun, which means lucky, he was, in fact, a very unlucky monarch. Inspite of his essential goodness, generosity and goodwill towards all, he failed as a ruler. It was, however, fortunate that he succeeded in recovering the crown of Delhi at the fag end of his life, without which he would not have had any real claim to an important place in the history of our country. It was even more fortunate that he had a son like Akbar who, by conquering most parts of the sub-continent of India and giving it one of the best systems of administration then known to the world, perpetuated the name of Humayun and of the Mughul dynasty in the land.

20

SHER SHAH SUR

The reign of Humayun is broken into two by an interlude of about fifteen years during which the Sur dynasty founded by the great Afghan monarch, Sher Shah, established its domination over most parts of northern India. The interlude is important for two reasons. Firstly, it was the last time that an Afghan dynasty sat on the throne of Delhi and ruled over north India from that central town. Secondly, the dynasty revived and reformed the old system of administration in the country and gave her peace, order and prosperity. This constituted a priceless legacy to Humayun's successors.

Sher Shah, the formidable rival of Humayun, was a man of humble origin. Farid, as he was originally called, was the grandson of Ibrahim Sur, a native of the mountainous region of Roh near Peshawar on the banks of the river Gomal. Ibrahim traded in horses, but, as he could not succeed in his business, he migrated to our country in search of employment, during the early years of the reign of Bahlol Lodi. Both Ibrahim Sur and his son, Hasan, entered the service of Mahabat Khan Sur and Daud Khan Sahukhail, the jagirdars of Hariana and Bakhala (Bhakra ?) in the Hoshiarpur district of the Panjab. The father and the son settled at Bajwara, two miles south-east of Hoshiarpur. It was here that Farid was born to a wife of Hasan Khan in 1472.[1] Sometime after Farid's birth Ibrahim and Hasan took up service under Jamal Khan Sarangkhani of Hisar and Umar Khan Sarwani the Khan-i-Alam, respectively. Later on, Hasan went over to the service of Jamal Khan. When the latter was transferred to Jaunpur by Sikandar Lodi, he conferred the jagir of the parganas of Sasaram, Khawaspur and Tanda on Hasan who had come over to Bihar along with his new master. It was at Sasaram on the river Son that Farid spent the early years of his youth.

Though a capable soldier, Hasan was a failure in the management of his household. He had married four wives and had eight

[1] This date was known to the 19th century writers, such as Bhartendu Harish Chandra and Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Dr. Qanungo, however, gives 1486.

sons. Farid and Nizam were the sons by his first wife and Sulaiman and Ahmad were born of the youngest wife. This youngest wife seems to have been a concubine. Hasan was greatly under her influence and bestowed his attention on her to the neglect of his elder wife. Consequently, Farid's boyhood must have been far from happy. His father neglected him, while his step-mother wat jealous of him. In 1494, at the age of 22, he decided to leave Sasaram and to make a career for himself somewhere else. Those days Jaunpur was an important centre of Islamic learning and culture and was spoken of as the 'Shiraz of India'. Farid made his way to this seat of learning and there he devoted himself to the study of Arabic and Persian languages and literatures. He read Arabic grammar and the well-known Persian works—the *Gulistan*, the *Bostan* and the *Sikandarnama*. He was a student of uncommon ability and hence attracted the attention of many people, specially Jamal Khan, the patron of his father, who effected a reconciliation between the father and son and persuaded Hasan to appoint Farid the manager of the former's jagir.

Manager of his father's jagir

On his return from Jaunpur, Farid devoted his energies to the administration of his father's jagir with ability and vigilance for about 21 years (1497-1518). This was the period of Farid's training in administration. He suppressed the rebellious zamindars, kept the civil and military officers under strict control, and gave peace to the people. His chief work at this time was the establishment of a good revenue system based on the measurement and classification of the land and the ascertainment of its actual produce. He took special care to protect the interests of the peasants and punished the unscrupulous revenue officials. His aim was to administer justice to all and in this he showed no concession to the unruly Afghan soldiers. Little did he realize that he was preparing himself as an apprentice for his future role as a mighty ruler of northern India.

The successful administration of Farid, however, roused the jealousy of his step-mother and, in 1518, again drove him from his father's house. He reached the court of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi and requested him to order the grant of his father's jagir to him. But the sultan of Delhi did not form a good opinion of a young man who complained against his own father, and did not grant his request. It so happened that Hasan died soon after this incident and Ibrahim had no objection to entertain Farid's request. He conferred on him the jagir of Sasaram, Khawaspur and Tanda. The ambitious

youth returned to South Bihar with the royal *farman* and settled down at Sasaram sometime about 1520 or 1521.

In the service of Sultan Muhammad of South Bihar : a period of adversity

The grant of his father's jagir by Ibrahim, however, did not settle the dispute about succession and Farid could not enjoy the jagir for long. Sulaiman, his step-brother, who was in charge of the jagir during the later days of his father's life, sought the intercession of Muhammad Khan Sur of Chaund (modern Chainpur) in the Shahabad district in Bihar. Muhammad Khan was not on good terms with Hasan. He took this opportunity of profiting by the quarrel among the brothers and proposed a division of the jagir between Farid and Sulaiman. But Farid refused to partition it, as it had been granted to him by Ibrahim Lodi. A far-sighted man, he took up service under Bahar Khan Lohani, the ruler of South Bihar and thus secured a powerful patron for his claims (1522). His services pleased Bahar Khan who conferred upon him the title of Sher Khan for killing a tiger single-handed in a hunting expedition. Very soon afterwards he was promoted to be the tutor of his master's young son, Jalal Khan. A little later, he was raised to be deputy-governor of South Bihar.

Sher Khan's rapid rise excited the jealousy of the Lohani and other Pathan nobles of South Bihar. When Sher Khan was absent from the court in order to attend to some matters in his jagir, one of his rivals poisoned the ears of Bahar Khan. The time was a critical one, particularly for the Afghans whose king, Ibrahim Lodi, had just been defeated and killed at the battle of Panipat and the sovereignty of Hindustan had passed to the Mughals under Babur. Bahar Khan, who had set himself up as an independent king, styling himself as Sultan Muhammad Shah, was gathering men and following a cautious policy of wait and see. Sher Khan's enemies represented to Muhammad Shah that Sher Khan was planning to join Mahmud Lodi, the brother of Ibrahim, who was trying to revive the Afghan power at Delhi. This was against the interests of Muhammad Shah as well, as he would have to accept Mahmud Lodi as his suzerain. Consequently, Sultan Muhammad appointed Muhammad Khan Sur of Chaund an arbiter to settle the dispute between Sher Khan and Sulaiman. Sher Khan again refused to partition the jagir and insisted on retaining the whole of his patrimony. On behalf of

Sulaiman, Muhammad Khan Sur took forcible possession of the paraganas and drove Sher Khan out of his home. Once again Sher Khan became a fugitive, wandering in search of employment. His only hope was to secure the help of Babur, who had established his empire in northern India, and get back his jagir from the jealous hands of Muhammad Khan Sur. With this intention he contacted Junaid Barlas, the Mughul governor of Kara and Manikpur, and through him secured a post in the Mughul service, in April 1527. When Babur undertook a campaign against the Afghans of Bihar, Sher Khan rendered useful service and his jagir was restored to him in March 1528. He was diplomatic and just enough to win the gratitude of his former enemy, Muhammad Khan Sur, by restoring to him Chaund which had been occupied by the Mughul troops during their campaign in Bihar.

Deputy-governor of Bihar

During his short stay with the Mughuls Sher Khan had discovered some glaring defects in their administration and military organization and felt that it was not impossible for the Afghans to recover their lost dominion. He was also struck by the vanity of the Mughuls who derided all non-Mughuls. He left the Mughul service towards the end of 1528 and returned to Bihar, not to unite the Afghans against Babur, as some modern writers have supposed, but because he could not pull on with them (Mughuls). Once again he went to the court of Sultan Muhammad of South Bihar and was re-appointed tutor and guardian of his son, Jalal Khan. Very soon after this, Sultan Muhammad died (1528), leaving Jalal Khan a minor. His widow, Dudu Bibi, became regent of the new sultan. She appointed Sher Khan her deputy or *vakil*. As deputy-governor, Sher Khan reorganized the administration, purged the army of its defects and strengthened his own position by loyal and devoted service to his young sovereign. At the same time he was not oblivious of his own interests and gathered around him a band of tried and faithful Afghan followers, mostly of the Sur clan, who were always ready to sacrifice their all for his sake.

Within one year, however, Sher Khan's fortune again met with a setback (1529). Mahmud Lodi, the younger brother of Ibrahim Lodi, appeared in Bihar at the invitation of some prominent Afghan nobles of that province. After the defeat of Rana Sangram Singh, on whose side he had fought at Khanua in March 1527, he had retired to Mewar, but had not given up his pretensions to the

sovereignty of Hindustan. On his arrival the Afghan leaders put their heads together and evolved a plan of action against the Mughuls. Practically all the Afghans rallied under the banner of Mahmud Lodi who took over the government of South Bihar from the boy-sultan, Jalal Khan, promising to restore the province to him after the Afghan victory against their common foe, Babur.

Sher Khan, however, was well aware of the incompetence of Mahmud Lodi and the jealousy and discord among his principal followers. He showed little enthusiasm for the Afghan cause under the leadership of Mahmud, and retired to his jagir on the pretext of making preparations for the proposed expedition. In fact, he did not want to be hostile towards Babur, at least for the time being, and did his best to suppress his real feelings. But Mahmud Lodi, who wanted the co-operation of all important Afghan leaders in this 'national' enterprise, insisted on Sher Khan's adhesion to the cause. He decided to march his force by way of Sasaram in order to persuade Sher Khan to join the Afghan army along with his followers. Sher Khan hesitated in the beginning, but after a second thought accorded Mahmud a royal reception and joined him with a contingent of his troops. In the initial stages of the war the Afghans were very successful. They proceeded to Ghazipur and also captured Banaras ; but on the arrival of the Mughul forces they became panicky, gave up the enterprise and Mahmud Lodi fled without fighting a single pitched battle. Many of the notable Afghan chiefs, including Sher Khan, submitted to Babur. Jalal Khan, the boy-sultan of South Bihar, who had taken refuge in Bangal on the appearance of Mahmud Lodi, came back to Bihar and waited on Babur on May 16, 1529. He was restored to the greater portion of his kingdom on agreeing to pay to Babur an annual tribute. Sher Khan, too, was restored to his jagir and became a Mughul vassal.

Dudu Bibi, the mother of Jalal Khan, once again invited Sher Khan and re-appointed him guardian of her son and also deputy-governor of Bihar, as before, after the restoration of Jalal Khan and the return of Babur to Agra. Being situated between two powerful kingdoms of Bangal and Delhi, South Bihar was in a constant danger of being drawn into a quarrel between these two and thus falling a prey to their aggression. Moreover, its administration and economy had suffered greatly, as it was compelled to become a theatre of war between Mahmud Lodi and Babur. Dudu Bibi rightly believed that a wise and experienced administrator of

the calibre of Sher Khan alone could restore South Bihar to its former prosperity. After his appointment Sher Khan applied himself heart and soul to the task of rehabilitating the province and improving its administration. Dudu Bibi died shortly after and Sher Khan became the virtual head of the government of South Bihar, while Jalal Khan was still a minor and a titular ruler. Under these circumstances, Sher Khan got a good opportunity of strengthening his hold upon the army, and won it over to his cause. He appointed his trusted followers to the key positions in both civil and military administration and took steps to increase his power and prestige in every way possible.

One of the most pressing problems facing South Bihar was the adjustment of its relations with Nusrat Shah of Bangal (1518-33), who wanted to extend his dominion at the expense of his neighbour. Sher Khan realized that he must find out some ally to counterbalance the danger from the side of Bangal. He cultivated friendly relations with Makhdum-i-Alam, the brother-in-law of Nusrat Shah, and his governor of Hajipur, who was on bad terms with his master. Sher Khan decided to use him as a counterpoise against Nusrat Shah. This roused the hostility of Nusrat Shah and he attacked his brother-in-law and killed him. Sher Khan, thereupon, appropriated the huge treasure hoarded by Makhdum-i-Alam. Flushed with his recent victory over Makhdum, Nusrat Shah invaded South Bihar, but he was badly defeated by Sher Khan in 1529. This victory over a powerful neighbour greatly enhanced Sher Khan's reputation and prestige. But, at the same time, it roused the jealousy of the Lohani nobles who could not tolerate the domination of one whom they looked upon as a mere servant of their chief. They poisoned Jalal Khan's ears and turned him against Sher Khan. Next, they hatched a plot to murder Sher Khan ; but the conspiracy failed due to the latter's vigilance. Finding a large party against him, Sher Khan decided to share power with the Lohanis ; but his proposal was rejected. On the contrary, the Lohanis invited Nusrat Shah of Bangal to assist them in snatching power from the hands of Sher Khan. Unable even to do this, the Lohani leaders with their minor sultan, Jalal Khan, fled to Nusrat Shah and took refuge in Bangal.

With the desertion of the boy-sultan Sher Khan became the virtual king of South Bihar, without a titular superior with pretensions to control his actions. But Sher Khan refrained from assuming any regal title and contented himself with the lesser designation of

Hazrat-i-Ala. He strengthened his position both financially and militarily by acquiring the strong fortress of Chunar as a result of his marriage with Lad Malika, the widow of Taj Khan, a former governor of the place. By this union Sher Khan profited in two ways : he acquired an impregnable fortress and also got an immense treasure which was found buried there. These achievements whetted his appetite and soared his ambition. Now he began dreaming of acting as an independent ruler and giving effect to his schemes of self-aggrandizement.

Early conflict with Humayun

Despite these successes, Sher Khan's rise to power was not to be an easy one. Very soon he met with a misfortune which brought about a temporary suspension of his lofty schemes. Although his principal Lohani rivals were now refugees in Bangal and he was the king of South Bihar in all but name and was doing everything in his power to unite the Indian Afghans and to improve their material and moral conditions he had a hostile element within his own race to contend with. Sher Khan had risen from a low station in life to the exalted status of the monarch of a kingdom. This could not be tolerated by some of the important Afghan officials of the province who looked upon him as an upstart. In 1530 these dissatisfied officials invited Mahmud Lodi, who was passing his days as a refugee since his defeat at the battle of Ghaghara. He accepted their invitation and came to Bihar. The time was proptitious for a fresh Afghan attempt for driving the Mughuls out and regaining their supremacy in Hindustan. Humayun, the heir-apparent to the Mughul throne, was lying seriously ill at Agra. Though his life was saved by Babur's sacrifice, the founder of the Mughul empire departed from this world towards the end of December 1530. The Indian Afghans were eager to turn their enemy's difficulties to their advantage. On Mahmud Lodi's arrival, Sher Khan was compelled to retire to his jagir, as he did not like to play a second fiddle to this Lodi pretender. The latter tried to win him over and went to the extent of promising him in writing that the whole of South Bihar would be restored to him as soon as Mahmud Lodi had acquired success against the Mughuls and become master of some territory elsewhere. He paid a visit to Sher Khan in the latter's jagir and persuaded him to co-operate with him and make united attack on the Mughuls. Though unwillingly, Sher Khan at last gave his assent to the plan and became a member of this Afghan confederacy.

After many months' preparations a campaign was now organized. Under the lead of Mahmud the Afghans occupied Banaras and marched on Jaunpur. Junaid Barlas, the Mughul governor, abandoned his post and retreated towards Agra. The emboldened Afghans now marched upon Lucknow and captured it. At this time Humayun was busy in his siege of Kalinjar. Hearing of the reverses suffered by his army, he patched up a hasty peace with the raja of that place and marched eastwards to check the advance of the Afghans. The two armies faced each other at Daunrua in the Nawabganj tahsil of the present Barabanki district in Awadh and a well-contested battle was fought there in August 1532, in which the Afghans were badly defeated. Their leader, Mahmud Lodi, fled to Orissa and he spent the rest of his life there, dying in 1542. Sher Khan had been an unwilling co-operator in this Afghan enterprise. He recovered South Bihar on the failure of the uprising and again became its ruler.

Humayun did not return to Agra immediately after his easy victory over Mahmud Lodi at Daunrua. He besieged the fortress of Chunargarh, which Sher Khan had obtained by his marriage with Lad Malika in 1530, and garrisoned it with his trustworthy soldiers. When the Mughul forces appeared in the vicinity of the fort, Sher Khan placed it in the charge of his second son, Jalal Khan, and himself withdrew into the interior of Bihar. The Mughul siege of Chunargarh lasted for four months (September to December, 1532). It was not an easy task for Humayun to reduce Jalal Khan to submission. Circumstances helped Sher Khan greatly to defy the Mughul arms. Soon after he had laid siege, Humayun received the alarming news of the hostile movements of Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, who was preparing to have a trial of strength with the Mughuls. Under these circumstances, Humayun decided to make a hurried peace, as he had done with the raja of Kalinjar. He agreed to allow Sher Khan to remain in possession of the fortress of Chunar on the latter's agreeing to place a contingent of 500 troops, commanded by his third son, Qutub Khan, for service in the Mughul army. These terms were acceptable to both and hence a peace was made and in January 1533, Humayun returned to Agra in order to settle his scores with Bahadur Shah.

Contest with Bangal (1533—1537)

Sher Khan returned to South Bihar from the vicinity of Chunar after the departure of Humayun for Agra. During the siege of

Chunar the king of Bangal had displayed consistent hostility towards Bihar. Now Sher Khan decided to retaliate and with that purpose started preparations for an invasion of Bangal. He strengthened his army and, summoning the Afghans from the various parts of India and specially from the north-western parts and from Roh, gave them employment and whatever salaries they demanded. When his preparations were complete, he proceeded in 1533 against the new king of Bangal, Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud. He threw up earthen redoubts even on the way and thus secured himself from being caught unawares. The Bangal army was led by Ibrahim Khan, son of Qutub Khan, an eminent commander of his day. The two armies faced each other at Surajgarh and a severe battle was fought there in 1534. By a clever stratagem Sher Khan lured the Bangal forces into an ambush and inflicted a severe defeat on them. The Bangal army suffered a great loss and thousands of its soldiers were slaughtered, as if, in cold blood. The result of the battle of Surajgarh was what Sher Khan had anticipated. "The whole of the treasures, elephants and a train of artillery (of the Bangal army) fell into the hands of Sher Khan, who was, thus, supplied with munitions of war and became master of the kingdom of Bihar and much other territory besides." Indeed, the battle of Surajgarh marked a turning point in his career. It gave rise to new and greater ambitions in his heart and opened the prospects of a bright future before him.

The victory of Surajgarh whetted Sher Khan's appetite for further conquests. He followed up his success by invading Bangal once again, while Humayun was busy in his campaign against Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. Sher Khan repeatedly defeated Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud and occupied the latter's territory west of the Teliagarhi pass. Hard pressed and harassed by the relentless aggrandizement of Sher Khan, the king of Bangal was compelled to seek the help of the Portuguese of Chinsura. The combined forces of Bangal and the Portuguese took prompt measures to defend the Teliagarhi and Sikrigali passes. But Sher Khan was too clever for the allies. Avoiding the passes, he cleverly worked round the allies' flank, and reaching Gaur, the capital of Bangal, threatened it in 1536. The Portuguese allies of Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud could be of no help. He had no other alternative but to enter into negotiations for peace and purchase a temporary immunity from attack from Sher Khan by surrendering to him gold worth thirteen lakhs of rupees.

The peace gave Mahmud only a temporary respite, for Sher

Khan was fired with the ambition of conquering the whole of Bangal. He also knew that it was not a very difficult affair, as he had already defeated the Bangal forces twice—at Surajgarh and Gaur. Moreover, he was aware of the details of the negotiations between Mahmud and the Portuguese and was anxious to prevent a firm alliance between the two. Within one year of the treaty he made preparations (1537) for a fresh attack on Bangal. A pretext was soon found. Mahmud had failed to pay the agreed annual tribute and had not given up his unfriendly policy. He was no match for Sher Khan and was compelled to take refuge in the fortress of Gaur. From there he sent an express appeal to Humayun to help him in his hour of danger. Sher Khan knew that he must act quickly if he wanted success. He sent his son, Jalal Khan, and his most capable and loyal general, Khawas Khan, to besiege Gaur and to finish off the conquest of Bangal before any aid from Humayun could reach the ruler of that kingdom. At the same time, he sent a part of his army to occupy some of the outlying districts of Mahmud's territory like Chittagong. The fall of the kingdom of Bangal was now only a question of time.

Humayun's march against Sher Khan; the fall of Chunargarh (1537—1538)

Sher Khan's rapid progress against Bangal and an enormous accession to his power roused Humayun who sent Hindu Beg to Jaunpur with instructions to study the situation and send a report as soon as possible. This Mughul nobleman, who seems to have been on friendly terms with Sher Khan, reported that the eastern frontier was quiet and there was nothing to fear from the Afghan chief. A short while afterwards Humayun received Mahmud's appeal for assistance and a little later the alarming tidings that the whole of Bangal was about to fall into Sher Khan's hands. Accordingly, the Mughul emperor, who had wasted a year (August 1536—July 1537) at Agra, made arrangements for setting out towards Chunar. He entrusted the government of Agra to Meer Muhammad Bakhshi and that of Delhi to Meer Fakir Ali and posted Yadgar Nasir Mirza at Kalpi, Nur-ud-din at Kanauj and Hindu Beg at Jaunpur and left Agra on 27th July, 1537. On arriving at Chunar in November, he ordered the investment of the fort which had been put by Sher Khan in the charge of his son, Qutub Khan, and brother, Ghazi Khan Sur. The fort could not be captured easily and the siege lasted for six months (October 1537—March 1538). Rumi Khan, however,

managed to capture it by a stratagem. After appointing Rumi Khan commander, the emperor advanced to Banaras, wavering whether he should proceed to Gaur to the assistance of Mahmud of Bangal or invade South Bihar in order to crush Sher Khan's rising power in the very heart of the latter's dominion. He had wasted six precious months before the walls of Chunar whose acquisition brought him little advantage, as it did not command land routes and could have safely been left with a detachment of his army to keep watch on the Afghan garrison. During this interval Sher Khan had conquered the Bangal territory between Mungir and Gaur (July to October, 1537) and besieged Mahmud's capital.

While encamped at Banaras Humayun opened negotiations with Sher Khan who had returned to Bihar leaving Jalal Khan and Khawas Khan to conduct the siege of Gaur. In order to be very near Sher Khan's territory Humayun now pressed on to Maner on the river Son. He asked Sher Khan to surrender all his territory in Bihar and Bangal and accept a small *jagir* in Rohtasgarh or Chunargarh or Jaunpur. The terms were naturally rejected by Sher Khan. Humayun now wanted the surrender of Bihar, but agreed that Sher Khan should continue to hold Bangal and pay him an annual tribute of Rs. 10 lakhs. Sher Khan agreed to the terms and Humayun sent him a robe of honour and a horse. A satisfactory solution of the dispute seemed to be in sight.

Sher Khan acquires Rohtasgarh

A little before the commencement of negotiations with Humayun, Sher Khan, who seems to have been aware of the emperor's designs, had acquired the strong fortress of Rohtasgarh in Bihar by stratagem. This fort is situated on the upper course of the river Son in the heart of an extensive expanse of land covered by hills and jungles and is believed to have been built by Rohitashwa, son of the celebrated Harish Chandra. It was in the possession of a Hindu raja with whose Brahman minister, named Churaman, Sher Khan cultivated friendly relations. There are two versions of the story regarding his acquisition of this strong fort which he wanted to use as a safe refuge for his family and treasures. It is said that he begged the raja to afford shelter to his women and on the latter's agreeing to do so he smuggled into the fort, in covered litters, a large number of well-armed Afghan troops disguised as women. Once inside the fort, they threw off their mask, captured the fort and drove away the raja's men. This story has been rejected by modern writers. The

other version is more worthy of credence. According to it Sher Khan, who had bribed the raja's minister, obtained from him a promise of shelter in the fort. Although the raja remonstrated against the minister's imprudent promise, yet he was obliged to agree, as Churaman said that he had given his word and his honour was at stake. Soon after the Afghans were allowed to enter the fort they expelled the raja's troops and took possession of the fort (1538). Rohtasgarh, one of the strongest forts in the country, not only afforded Sher Khan a safe retreat for his family but also gave him a huge treasure that had been piled up there by generations of thrifty Hindu kings. Having lodged his women and children there, Sher Khan felt free to settle his scores with Humayun.

Gaur falls into Afghan hands

While Humayun was wavering between peace with Sher Khan and his projected campaign against Bangal, Jalal Khan and Khawas Khan, whom Sher Khan had left to conquer Gaur, were pushing on with the siege of the capital of Bangal. They made attempts to storm the fort. Sher Khan sent instructions to his son to bring the Bangal campaign to a speedy conclusion by capturing Gaur, as Humayun was likely to hasten to the support of Sultan Mahmud. Khawas Khan now redoubled his efforts. He devastated the country around and cut off all supplies, reducing the garrison to great straits. Mahmud being hard pressed, evacuated his capital and fled towards North Bihar. The Afghans pursued him and defeated him in a pitched battle in which he was badly wounded ; but he succeeded in making good his escape, and retreated towards Hajipur in perturbation of mind. The two Afghan generals now occupied Gaur and established Sher Khan's rule in Bangal. Sher Khan was pleased at the news and sent instructions to his son, Jalal Khan, to transfer the huge treasures accumulated by generations of the sultans to his new asylum of Rohtasgarh before Humayun could approach the western boundary of Bangal.

Break with Humayun ; the Mughul occupation of Bangal

At this time Humayun received piteous appeals from Mahmud of Bangal, who a little later himself arrived at the Mughul camp at Maner and sought the protection of the emperor. Humayun, who had settled terms of peace with Sher Khan, now changed his mind, gave up the idea of ratifying the treaty and decided to proceed to Bangal to conquer that province. Sher Khan rightly looked upon

the failure of the conclusion of a treaty as a breach of faith on the part of Humayun. He roused the resentment and passion of his Afghan troops by telling them that inspite of his willingness to surrender the very home of the Afghans in India and agreeing to become a Mughul vassal and paying the emperor a tribute, the latter had declined to make peace and was bent upon the complete destruction of the Afghan race. His men gave him the assurance of standing by him and fighting to the bitter end for the preservation of the Afghan race.

Humayun now resumed his journey eastward and although Mahmud died at Khalgaon (Colgaon), Humayun continued his march to capture Gaur. Sher Khan, who had made arrangements for the transfer of Bangal treasures from Gaur to Rohtasgarh, directed Jalal Khan to proceed to Teliagarhi with his army and defend the pass against the Mughuls so as to enable the Afghans to carry away the Gaur treasures. Teliagarhi, situated seven miles east of the modern Sahebganj (on the E.I.R. Loop line), was in medieval age "the key of Bangal". Jalal Khan did not content himself with merely defending the place, but attacked the advance-guard of the Mughuls under Mubarak Khan. So successfully did he perform his duty of holding up the Mughuls at this pass that Humayun was delayed for one month and Sher Khan during the interval transferred all the treasures from Gaur to Rohtas. As soon as this work was accomplished Jalal Khan was recalled from Teliagarhi which he left so quietly that the Mughuls came to know of his evacuation of the pass only the next day. Humayun now proceeded to Gaur, Sher Khan wisely permitting the entire Mughul army to proceed to Bangal without molestation. As soon as Humayun had entered Gaur the Afghan chief made arrangements for cutting off his communications. He sent parties of Afghans to Banaras, Jaunpur, Kalpi and Kanauj to drive away the Mughul officers from there. The Afghans occupied Tirhut and attacked and killed Meer Fazli, governor of Banaras, and occupied the place. Next, they captured Jaunpur and thence proceeded towards Kanauj. Hindal had already abandoned his post and fled to Agra where he set himself up as king. He killed Shaikh Bahlol for whom Humayun had great regard, and alienated important nobles and the members of the Mughul ruling family. The entire country from Teliagarhi to Kanauj fell into the hands of Sher Khan who posted his men at important places and made arrangements for the establishment of order and the collection of revenue.

All this time Humayun was sunk in sloth and pleasures at Gaur. After eight months' inaction he was roused from his slumber by the alarming news that his lines of communications had been completely shattered and that he had been completely cut off from Delhi and Agra as a result of the Afghan occupation of the country from Teliagarhi to Kanauj. He now hastened to retrace his steps towards Agra, leaving Jahangir Quli Beg with five thousand men to hold Bangal.

Battle of Chausa (June 26, 1539)

Askari led the advance-guard, while Humayun at the head of another division marched a few miles behind. At Mungir the brothers joined and crossed the Ganga to its southern bank and proceeded along the old Grand Trunk Road which passed through the territory of Sher Khan. The vigilant Afghan scouts regularly communicated the movement of the Mughul army to Sher Khan, who decided for an open contest with the Mughul emperor. The emperor, however, could not keep the Grand Trunk Road and near Bihiya (in Bhojpur district) he was obliged to cross the river back to its northern bank. His mistakes and difficulties gave Sher Khan an opportunity to give up the policy of sitting on the fence and to get ready for a contest. He hovered round the Mughul army, harassed it in every possible manner, and compelled it to engage in a series of skirmishes. Being thus harassed, Humayun reached Chausa, 10 miles south-west of Baksar and a short distance from the river Karmanasa, which is the boundary between Bihar and the modern Uttar Pradesh, and again crossed the Ganga over to its southern bank. Sher Khan now personally appeared in the neighbourhood and withdrew himself a little distance in order to enable Humayun, who was crossing the river, to land on its southern bank without hesitation. This was a proper moment for the emperor to have launched an attack on the Afghan troops who were tired as the result of several days' forced and rapid march, while Humayun's own men were comparatively fresh. The delay gave Sher Khan time to fortify his camp and give his men the much-needed rest. Also a large number of Afghan troops from Bihar gathered under his banner. For the above reasons Sher Khan, too, did not take up the offensive and the antagonists, therefore, lay facing each other for three months. In fact Sher Khan purposely delayed the contest, as his strategy was to wait till the advent of the rainy season when he would compel the Mughuls to fight at a disadvantage.

During this interval Humayun made an attempt to avoid battle and settle his dispute with Sher Khan by peaceful means. He sent an envoy to the Afghan camp agreeing to allow Sher Khan to retain the provinces of Bangal and Bihar if he acknowledged him (Humayun) his overlord, read the *khutba* and struck coins in the emperor's name throughout his dominions. But he wanted him to surrender the remaining territory. Sher Khan feigned willingness to comply and suggested that in addition to Bangal and Bihar he should be allowed to retain possession of Chunargarh. Humayun, however, did not agree to this and the negotiations fell through. But realizing his own weakness, the emperor, on the eve of the battle of Chausa, made one more attempt to arrive at an understanding and sent the saintly Mulla Mir Muhammad Parghari to Sher Khan to persuade him to give up his hostile intention. The latter reciprocated and deputed Shaikh Khalil, who, too, was reputed to be a man of piety, to negotiate terms on his behalf. Humayun was impressed by the Afghan agent and entrusted him with negotiations on his behalf also. When Shaikh Khalil reported to Sher Khan the substance of his talk with Humayun, the Afghan leader shrewdly asked the Shaikh's personal opinion whether the Afghans should fight for their existence or make peace with the Mughuls. Shaikh Khalil replied that they ought to fight. This was what Sher Khan really wanted. Hardly had Shaikh Khalil uttered the words when he declared that the peace talks had come to an end.

As soon as the rains set in Sher Khan got ready for the contest. The Mughul encampment, which stood on the low land between the Ganga and the Karmanasa, was flooded, causing confusion among the troops. On 25th June, 1539, Sher Khan marshalled his troops and gave out that he was proceeding to attack Maharatha Chero, who was the chief of an aboriginal tribe in the Shahabad district of Bihar. The news put the Mughuls off their guard. Sher Khan actually proceeded in the direction of the Chero territory, but returned after midnight and made a surprise attack on the Mughuls who were asleep in their camps. The Afghan army, which was divided into three divisions under Sher Khan, his son Jalal Khan, and his greatest general, Khawas Khan, respectively, attacked the Mughuls from three different directions. Consternation fell upon the imperialists. The tumult aroused Humayun who sprang on a horse and tried to collect his men, but most of his troops had already dispersed and fled to save themselves. Humayun failed to reach his

tent, but he was conducted out of danger by a few of his trusted followers. Sher Khan won the battle and routed the Mughuls. Humayun could not cross the Ganga on an elephant and was obliged to go to the other side with the help of an inflated skin (*mashak*) of a water-carrier, named Nizam. All his camp with its splendid equipage fell into the hands of Sher Khan. Many of the ladies of the Mughul harem, including his chief queen, Bega Begam, were left behind in the camp. The Afghan victory was so complete that the entire Mughul army was annihilated, and not a trace of the enemy was left. Humayun himself, attended by a few men, fled towards Agra.

The victory of Chausa proved to be momentous, and it produced far-reaching results. Its first consequence was to bring about a radical change in Sher Khan's objective in life. The horizon of his "ambition was immensely widened." Dr. Qanungo rightly observes that one year before Chausa he would have contented himself with the position of a Mughul vassal, if he had been left unmolested in Bangal. "Now he won, by this single stroke, Jaunpur in addition to Bangal and Bihar in independent sovereignty and could legitimately claim equality with the emperor." His ambition now was to drive away the Mughuls from India and to sit upon the throne of Delhi. Soon after the victory of Chausa he crossed the Ganga and occupied the country as far as Kanauj. He took steps to consolidate his new possessions and to convert them into compact kingdom.

Sher Khan as king of Bangal and Bihar (1539—1540)

The victory at Chausa made Sher Khan a *de facto* king of Bihar and Bangal. He had only to expel from Gaur the garrison of Mughul troops left there by Humayun. But, inspite of his vast possessions, Sher Khan was still a private man and had no legal status. In order, therefore, to command the unquestioned allegiance and loyalty of his people, it was necessary for him to go through the formality of a coronation. That step alone would raise him to a position of equality with other rulers in this country. Sher Khan had not forgotten how inspite of his ability and success he had been twice brushed aside and almost all the notable Afghans had flocked under the banner of such a worthless creature as Mahmud Lodi simply because he was a descendant of Bahlol Lodi and had assumed the high sounding title of sultan after the defeat and death of his

brother, Ibrahim Lodi. Hence he decided to become king in name as well as in fact. But being aware of the democratic character of his Afghan followers he proceeded rather cautiously in carrying out his new project. At a meeting of the Afghan notables immediately after their grand victory, a suggestion was made regarding the issue of letters of victory (*Fatehnamah*). Sher Khan shrewdly remarked that it could only be done in the name of a king. Thereupon, *Masnad-i-Ali* Isa Khan, guessing his chief's innermost desire proposed that their leader, Sher Khan, should assume the title of king. The proposal was seconded by Azam Humayun Sarwani and Biban Lodi. Other notables present accepted the proposal with acclamation. The Afghan soldiery now urged that the coronation ceremony should be performed without delay. Accordingly Sher Khan "ordered the astrologers to fix an auspicious moment." The ceremony was simple. Sher Khan took his seat upon the throne and the royal umbrella was held up over his head. He assumed the title of Sher Shah and coins were struck and the *khutba* read in his name. After the ceremony letters of victory were drafted and sent to various parts of his dominions.

Immediately after the coronation ceremony, which seems to have taken place at Chausa, Sher Shah sent an army to Gaur in order to expel the Mughul garrison from there. Jahangir Quli Beg Khan was defeated and slain along with his companions. The whole of Bangal was now occupied. Next, arrangements were made to establish garrisons in the country up to Kanauj and Kalpi which had been partly reduced and occupied before the battle of Chausa. The new king settled his conquests by appointing officers to maintain peace, administer justice and collect revenues.

Simultaneously with the work of settling the new country Sher Shah took steps to pursue Humayun. It will be recalled that some of the ladies of Humayun's harem had fallen into his hands at Chausa. Sher Shah had made suitable arrangement for their protection and comfort. After his coronation ceremony he sent the ladies under an escort back to Humayun. The pursuit of Humayun seemed to have been half-hearted. Had Sher Shah really cared to intercept the fugitive emperor, Humayun would not have reached Agra in safety. But Sher Shah sent a mission to Malwa and Gujarat requesting the rulers of those provinces not to afford any shelter to Humayun and promising them help if they attacked the fugitive emperor. There was no response from Gujarat as it had not yet

recovered from its recent confusion. But Mallu Khan of Mandu, who had set himself up as king under the title of Qadir Shah, sent a favourable reply.

Battle of Bilgram (May 17, 1540)

Meanwhile Humayun who had met with many difficulties during his flight from Chausa reached Agra where he held consultations with his brothers, who, as usual, failed to agree among themselves. Despite many handicaps, Humayun got together a fresh army to fight Sher Shah, who was rapidly approaching Agra. He had despatched his son, Qutub Khan, towards Mandu in order to persuade Qadir Shah to co-operate with him and turn Humayun's flank from that side. Informed of his movement, Humayun deputed Askari and Hindal to proceed against Qutub Khan and overtake him before he could effect a junction with Qadir Shah. The latter made no attempt to join Qutub Khan who was attacked, defeated and killed by the Mughul army near Kalpi. Askari and Hindal returned to join Humayun who advanced towards Kanauj to meet Sher Shah who had already arrived there and was encamped on the eastern bank of the river. The Mughul army consisted of two lakhs of men all told, but its fighting strength was not more than 40,000. According to Mirza Haider, Sher Shah's troops numbered 15,000. There is, however, reason to believe that the Afghan army could not have been inferior in numerical strength to that of Humayun. The antagonists lay encamped facing each other for one month without taking up an offensive. Sher Shah, however, matured his plan of a surprise attack on this antagonist as soon as the first shower of rain fell and swamped the Mughul camp. The plan succeeded and on the 17th May, 1540, while the Mughuls were shifting their camp to a better site, he launched an attack on them and successfully deprived them of the use of their heavy artillery which was left behind. Inspite of Mirza Haider's attempt to marshal the Mughul troops Humayun suffered an easy defeat and fled back towards Agra. (Details *vide* Chapter III, pages 56-58).

SHER SHAH AS KING OF HINDUSTAN (1540—1545)

Pursuit of Humayun

After this momentous victory Sher Shah crossed the river and occupied Kanauj. From there he despatched Barmazid Ghur with a large force to pursue Humayun and hound him out of the

country, but not to engage him in battle. Another army was sent to besiege Gwalior, while some troops were ordered to occupy Sambhal and the territory to the east of the Ganga. Barmazid pursued Humayun to Agra. On entering Agra he slew a number of Mughuls. When Sher Shah, after consolidating the conquered country, reached Agra a few days after Humayun's flight, he rebuked Barmazid for his cruel conduct and sent him and Khawas Khan to continue the pursuit of the ex-emperor. By the time Humayun reached Lahore his Afghan pursuers had arrived at Sultanpur Lodi (July 1540). As the rains had set in Khawas Khan had to halt at Sultanpur for about three months. Meanwhile, Sher Shah entered Delhi and took steps to organise its administration. Thence he proceeded to the frontier of the Panjab to be in touch with the movements of the fugitive Mughul emperor.

Humayun had clear three months' respite at Lahore, and yet he failed to re-unite his brothers and chalk out a plan to make a firm stand against the Afghans. Kamran felt that if he agreed to allow Humayun a permanent footing in the Panjab he would eventually have to lose Kabul and Kandhar as well. So he entered into negotiations with Sher Shah in the erroneous belief that it was safer to hand over the Panjab to him. Humayun had, consequently, to abandon Lahore as soon as the Afghans had crossed the river near Sultanpur in the third week of October 1540. The Mughuls fled from Lahore in great confusion. At the town of Khushab on the Jhelam there was an unseemly quarrel between Humayun and Kamran who would not allow his brother to pass through Afghanistan. From that place Humayun took the road towards Sindh, while Kamran, abandoning the Panjab, left for Kabul. The moment Humayun had left the boundary of Hindustan Khawas Khan gave up the pursuit and halted on the western bank of the river Jhelam. By this time Sher Shah, who was supervising the activities of his men from his camp at Sarhind, arrived at Lahore and without halting there for long proceeded to the Chinab and reached Khushab. He then sent two parties of his troops, one under Khawas Khan and the other under Qutub Khan, to pursue the Mughuls, with instructions not to engage them but to drive them beyond the borders of the kingdom. Khawas Khan pursued Humayun as far as the Panjanad river, to the west of Uch, from where they returned and rejoined Sher Shah at Khushab.

Conquest of the Gakkhar country

Sher Shah remained encamped at Khushab for a few months and received submission of Baloch chiefs, such as Ismail Khan, Fateh Khan, Ghazi Khan and some others who inhabited the country between the Chinab and the Indus. Then he undertook a campaign for the reduction of the Gakkhar country which was a mountainous region and situated between the upper courses of the Jhelam and the Indus. Its possession for the ruler of Delhi was necessary owing to its strategic situation. Sher Shah undertook the tour of the mountainous area and launched an offensive against the Gakkhar chiefs. He ravaged their territory, but failed to reduce them to complete submission. A few of the chiefs, particularly Rai Sarang Gakkhar, refused to acknowledge Sher Shah's authority and continued to be hostile. The Afghan king, therefore, decided to build a fort there in order to guard his northern frontier and to keep the Gakkhars in check. He selected a strategic site in the hills, 10 miles north of the town of Jhelam, and there he built a gigantic fortress and named it Rohtas, after his well-known stronghold in Bihar. He garrisoned it with 50,000 seasoned Afghan troops under the command of his able generals, Haibat Khan Niyazi and Khawas Khan. He also tried to dislodge Mirza Haider from Kashmir by supporting Kachi Chakk, but did not succeed. At this time he received news of the rebellion of his governor of Bangal and so he left the work of the subjugation of the Gakkhars in the hands of his lieutenants and hastened towards Bangal (March 1534) to chastise the rebellious Khizr Khan.

The new administration of Bangal

During Sher Shah's absence for more than a year, Khizr Khan, governor of Bangal, began entertaining the dream of independence. He married the daughter of the deceased Sultan Mahmud of Gaur in order to enlist the support of the sympathisers of the ex-ruling family of Bangal, and began to behave as if he were an independent ruler. Sher Shah was much annoyed on hearing the reports and proceeded quickly to Gaur to bring Khizr Khan to book. He dismissed the governor and put him in chains. Having decided to do away with military governorship to avert the danger of a future rebellion, he remodelled the administration of Bangal. He divided the province into several *sarkars* (districts) placing each of them under an officer called *shiqdar* with a small force under his command adequate for maintaining peace and order. They were appointed by the king and

were responsible to him alone. To supervise the work of these officers and to settle disputes among them he appointed a civilian, named Qazi Fazilat, as the head of the province. This officer did not seem to have a powerful army under his command. His duties were to see that all the districts were properly administered, that the royal revenues were regularly remitted to the central treasury, and that the district officers did not enter into any conspiracy and did not mediate a rebellion against the king. These arrangements completely "changed the military character of the provincial administration and substituted a completely new mechanism, at once original in principle and efficient in working."

Conquest of Malwa (1542)

From Bangal Sher Shah returned to Agra. In 1542 he invaded Malwa whose possession was essential for the integrity and safety of his kingdom. Mallu Khan, who had obtained possession of Mandu, Ujjain and Sarangpur in 1537 and set himself up as an independent king under the title of Qadir Shah, gave offence to Sher Shah by claiming equality with him. He had also failed to fulfil his promise of supporting Sher Shah's son, Qutub Khan, against the Mughuls, and Qutub Khan had been surrounded and slain by Askari and Hindal in 1540. For these reasons, Sher Shah considered it necessary to undertake an expedition to Malwa. On reaching Gwalior, which inspite of its prolonged siege by his army, had not surrendered, he received the submission of the governor of the fortress. Then he pushed on to Sarangpur. Qadir Shah feeling helpless before the mighty invader, left Ujjain and waited on Sher at Sarangpur. The Afghan monarch received him with courtesy and the two entered Ujjain, the then capital of Malwa. Sher took possession of the place and transferred Qadir Shah to the governorship of Lakhnauti in Bangal (according to another authority, Kalpi). Qadir Shah became apprehensive of Sher Shah's intention and fled along with his family one night and took refuge with Mahmud III of Gujarat. A major portion of Malwa was thus annexed to Sher Shah's dominions and placed under the charge of Shujaat Khan. Some time after Qadir Shah attacked Shujaat Khan, but was eventually beaten.

On his return march from Ujjain to Agra, Sher Shah passed by way of Ranthambhor and successfully persuaded the commandant of the fortress to deliver it into his hands. He remained for one year at Agra during which period he engaged himself in organising the administration of his kingdom.

Conquest of Raisin (1543)

The principality of Raisin in Central India had risen to a place of importance during the later days of Humayun's reign. Its ruler, Puran Mal, son of Rai Silhadi, a Chauhan Rajput, had conquered Chanderi and reduced many Muslim families that had been in possession of considerable land. In 1542 Puran Mal had waited on Sher Shah and had been honoured by the bestowal of princely gifts. But the Afghan monarch coveted the fertile principality of Raisin. Moreover, he had received reports of Puran Mal's policy of subjugating the old feudal Muslim families, some of whom were reduced to poverty and their women enslaved and driven to take to the profession of dancing. So he wanted to punish Puran Mal, whose conduct in his eyes amounted to an offence against Islam. Leaving Agra in 1543, he proceeded to Mandu and thence to Raisin which was besieged. Puran Mal seems to have been prepared for the contest and the siege lasted for a long time. Sher Shah saw no other way except starving the garrison by cutting off all supplies. Even then the brave Rajputs did not surrender. But when Sher Shah made a solemn promise sworn on the Quran that the lives of the Rajput chief and his followers and their property would be respected, Puran Mal surrendered, and they were lodged in a camp near Sher Shah. It is said that Sher Shah was inclined to keep his word, but at the appeals made by the widows of the Muslims of Chanderi, who had suffered at Puran Mal's hands, he changed his mind. But he did not know how to extricate himself from the obligation of the oath that he had taken on the Quran. The fanatical qazis, however, came to his help and they declared that an oath that should not have been taken could not be binding on him. This theological pronouncement agreed with the innermost desire of Sher Shah himself. He made up his mind to attack Puran Mal. His elephants were kept in readiness and the Afghan troops were posted around the Rajput camp during the night. When the day dawned, Puran Mal discovered that an attack was to be made on him. He, thereupon, killed his women with his own hands and directed his followers to despatch off their families so as not to be obsessed by the thought of their safety and be in a position to fight the Afghans and face death without fear. As they were busy in this ghastly work the Afghans fell on them. Puran Mal and his brave troops displayed prodigies of valour and in the words of the Muslim historian, fought "like hogs at bay". But

they were hopelessly outnumbered and killed to a man. Some of the Rajput women and children who remained were converted into slaves. Sher Shah's perfidious conduct against Puran Mal is "the deepest blot on his memory".

The acquisition of Multan and Sindh

When Sher Shah was recalled from Khushab by the news of a rebellion in Bangal he had left Khawas Khan and Haibat Khan to administer the Panjab and keep the Gakkhars in check. As these two officers could not pull on together, Sher Shah removed Khawas Khan and appointed Haibat Khan Niyazi governor of the province with instructions to reduce the rebellious chiefs and bring the neighbouring territories under his control. The new governor had to face two rebel leaders, Fateh Khan Jat, whose depredations had made the road between Delhi and Lahore unsafe, and Bakhshu Langah, who had established himself as an independent ruler of Multan. Haibat Khan marched on Ajudhan (Pak Pattan), which was Fateh Khan's stronghold. The Jat chief fled from his headquarters and was besieged in a mud fort. He was, however, defeated and compelled to surrender. He was made a prisoner. Next, Haibat Khan proceeded to Multan and occupied it. Sher Shah was pleased with this achievement and rewarded Haibat Khan. He instructed the governor to repeople Multan, which had been deserted, and not to introduce the measurement system and realise one-fourth of gross produce of land in accordance with the custom of the Langahs. While Fateh Khan Jat and Hindoo Baloch, who had been taken prisoners, were put to death, Sher Shah spared the lives of Bakhshu Langah and his son. He retained Bakhshu Langah's son as a hostage and restored his land to him. Fateh Jang Khan was put in charge of Multan. As the province of Sindh had already been acquired by Sher Shah during his stay at Khushab in 1541 and Ismail Khan, a local chief confirmed as its ruler, Sher Shah's conquest in the north-western corner included Multan and Sindh besides the Panjab proper.

War with Maldeva ; acquisition of Rajasthan

After the death of Rana Sanga of Mewar the state of Marwar, with its capital at Jodhpur, had risen to occupy the first place among the independent kingdoms in Rajasthan. Its ruler, Maldeva Rathor, who ascended the throne after the death of his father, Rao Gangaji, in 1531, was easily the most notable king in the whole of central Hindustan. A gifted soldier and a clever diplomat, he entered on a

career of conquest immediately after taking up the reins of government and conquered Sojat, Nagaur, Ajmer, Merta, Jaitaran, Bilara, Bhadrajuns, Mallani, Siwana, Didwana, Pachbhadra and Bali. He waged war against the sister-state of Bikaner and annexed more than half of it. He then fought against Jaipur and captured Jalor, Tonk, Toda, Malpur and a number of other places. He pushed his boundary in the direction of Delhi to include the town of Jhajjhar, about 30 miles from Delhi. Being an ambitious diplomat, he sent an invitation to Humayun in June 1541, to come to Jodhpur and make an attempt to recover the throne of Delhi with his assistance. Obviously, Maldeva's object was to have on the throne of Delhi a ruler who should be his friend and ally. But Humayun appeared near Jodhpur a little more than thirteen months after the receipt of the invitation when the political situation in the country had undergone a considerable change and Sher Shah had established himself as the ruler of most of northern India and consolidated his position beyond question. Moreover, some of the Rajput chiefs, notably Rao Kalyan Mal of Bikaner, who had suffered defeat and spoliation at the hands of Maldeva, had joined Sher Shah and were pressing him to invade Marwar. Sher Shah, therefore, wrote to Maldeva asking him not to give shelter to Humayun but to arrest and deliver him into his hands. Maldeva was on the horns of a dilemma and did not know what to do. His sense of hospitality and chivalry as a Rajput stood in the way of his laying hands on a royal fugitive to whom he had extended an invitation. On the other hand, Sher Shah, who had increased his power and strength so as to establish his undoubted claim for the sovereignty of the whole of northern India was anxious to persuade the chiefs of Rajasthan to submit and pay him tribute. Besides, he (Sher Shah) was being goaded by Maldeva's Rajput enemies to undertake an expedition against Marwar. Under these embarrassing circumstances the ruler of Marwar chose to be neutral in order not to give offence to the mighty Sher Shah. When Humayun reached Phalodi, about 60 miles short of Jodhpur, Maldeva sent him some fruits, but gave no definite promise of military assistance. Humayun sent his trusted agents to Jodhpur to find out Maldeva's intentions and his attitude towards him. While at Jodhpur, one of these agents, Shams-ud-din Atka Khan, noticed Sher Shah's envoy at the Rathor capital and suspected treachery on the part of the Rathor king. This was confirmed by other agents. Humayun,

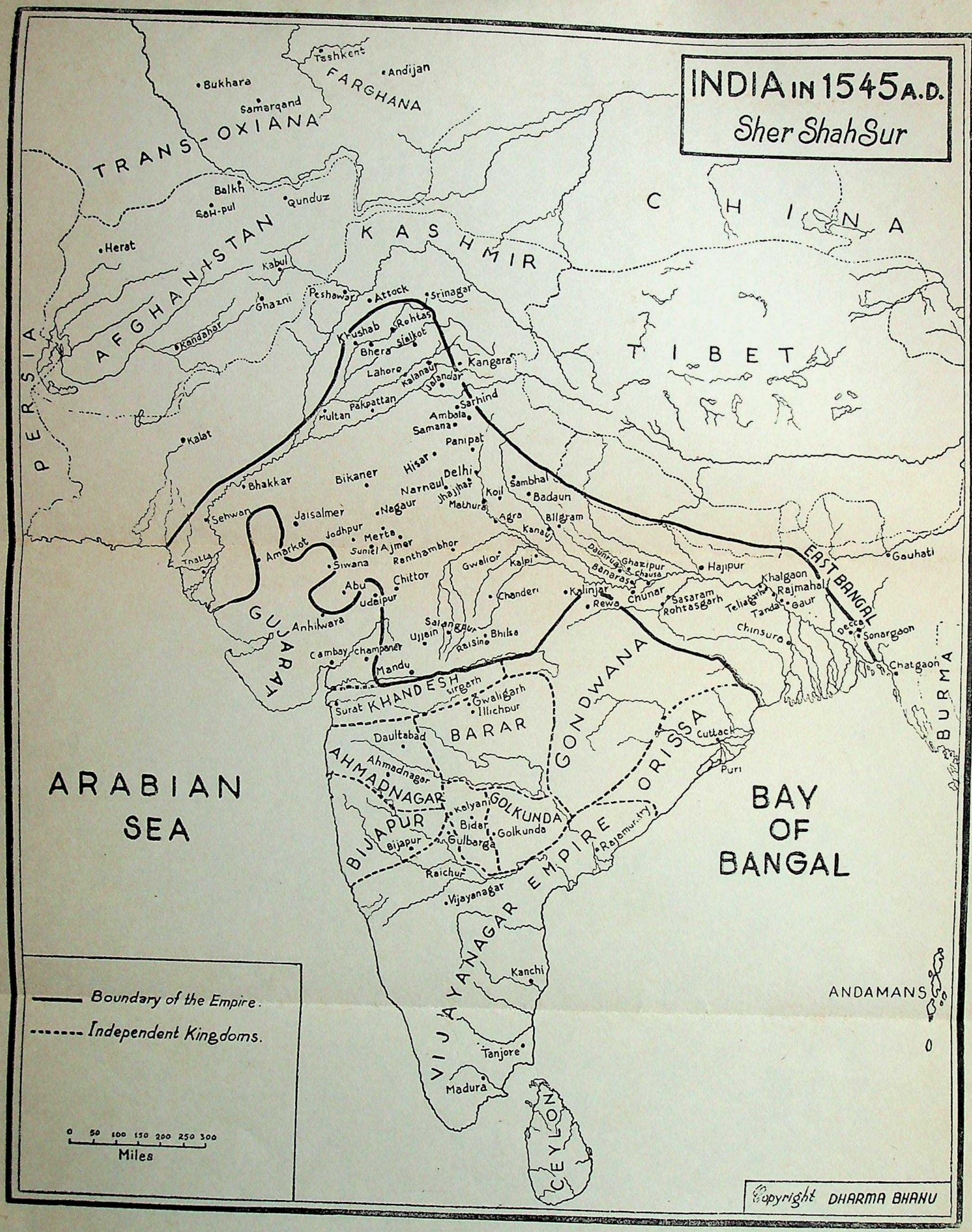
therefore, had to retrace his steps towards Sindh in August 1542, the Rathor troops harassing him on the way.

Sher Shah was not satisfied with Maldeva's dubious conduct ; he wanted absolute friendliness and submission. Above all, he wanted Maldeva to capture and deliver the ex-king Humayun into his hands. Secondly, the existence of such a powerful ruler as Maldeva, whose kingdom embraced not only Nagaur and Ajmer, which had formerly been parts of the Sultanate of Delhi, but also Jhajjhar, 30 miles from Delhi, was a standing offence to Sher Shah. The kingdom of Marwar was likely to be a danger for his safety. A war between Sher Shah and Maldeva was, therefore, inevitable. Sher Shah, who was at the time of Humayun's march to Marwar not ready for settling his scores with Maldeva once for all, followed the policy of overawing him. So in August 1542, he ordered the mobilisation of his troops so as to mass them on the border of Marwar. It was on account of Sher Shah's movement that Maldeva was compelled to depute Rathor troops to hound Humayun out of Marwar. Towards the end of 1543, however, when Sher Shah was free from the Raisin expedition he decided to conquer Marwar and marched against Maldeva at the head of 80,000 horse, the largest and the most magnificent army that he had ever led into the field. Starting from Agra, he proceeded to Didwana and thence towards Jodhpur in order to invade Maldeva's capital before the latter, who was away near Ajmer, could return to obstruct his march. As he entered the territory of Maldeva, he adopted the precaution of entrenching the camp at every stage by piles of sand bags. When he reached Merta, 70 miles north-east of Jodhpur and 42 miles west of Ajmer, Maldeva was frightened and at the head of his 40,000 horse hastened back to save his capital and to face the enemy in open battle.* The two armies lay opposite one another for a month at the village of Sumel, near Jaitaran. Sher Shah was reduced to great straits as he could get with great difficulty supplies for his troops and fodder for his horses. The initiative was in the hands of Maldeva, and Sher Shah did not know what to do. He, therefore, thought of a stratagem to extricate himself from the critical situation. Having caused letters to be written to himself on behalf of Maldeva's nobles promising that they would arrest the Rathor king and deliver him into his hands, he had them enclosed in

* The above information was kindly supplied by Maharaj-kumar Dr. Raghubir Sinh of Sitamau.

a *kharita* (silken bag) and dropped them near Maldeva's camp, as if they had fallen there by accident. The *vakil* of Maldeva picked up the *kharita* and forwarded the letters to his master. Maldeva was dismayed and, suspecting treachery on the part of his officers, decided to give up the impending fight. When the Rajput chieftains heard of their master's resolution of not giving battle and of his suspicion against them, Jayata and Kumpa and some others separated themselves from the main Rathor force and with their 12,000 followers attacked the Afghans in order to clear themselves from the charge of treachery. They carried everything before them and cut their way almost to the very heart of Sher Shah's camp, but were overwhelmed by superior numbers and cut down to a man. Maldeva now saw the truth. But it was too late. His army had dispersed. Nevertheless, the valour of the Rathors had so much impressed Sher Shah, whose loss at their hands had been so great, that he exclaimed that he had almost lost the empire of Hindustan for a handful of *bazra* (millet). As Maldeva had retreated to Jodhpur and from there to Siwana on the border of Gujarat, the Afghan king occupied his territory from Ajmer to Mount Abu. Having left Khawas Khan and Isa Khan Niyazi to reduce Marwar to order Sher Shah proceeded to Chittor, the capital of Mewar. Marwar, however, did not remain for long in Sher Shah's possession. Within two months of his death Maldeva returned from Siwana, drove away the Afghan governor from Jodhpur and re-occupied his lost territory (July 1545).

There was little difficulty in acquiring Mewar. The Sisodia state, which had once occupied a pre-eminent position in Rajasthan, had sunk into insignificance after the death of Rana Sanga. At this time, it was passing through one of the darkest periods of its history. Banbir, an usurper, had murdered Vikramajit and planned to kill the infant Udaya Singh, the father of the future Pratap. Mewar had thus not recovered from the evil effects of internecine dissensions that followed the accession of the boy-king Udaya Sinh, in 1542. Not in a position to offer any resistance, the courtiers sent to Sher Shah the keys of the fortress on behalf of Udaya Sinh. Sher Shah placed Shams Khan, brother of Khawas Khan, in charge of Chittor and obtained possession of Jahajpur. Next he occupied Ranthambhor and appointed his son, Adil Khan, its governor. Thus most parts of Rajasthan *minus* Jaisalmer and Bikaner came under the suzerainty of Sher Shah who wisely left the Rajput chiefs in possession of their states


INDIA IN 1545 A.D.
Sher Shah Sur
Tashkent
Andijan
FARGHANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
TRANS-OXIANA
Balkh
Qunduz
Soh-pul
CHINA
Herat
AFGHANISTAN
KASHMIR
Kabul
Ghazni
Peshawar
Attock
Srinagar
PERSIA
Kandahar
Khushab
Rohtas
Bhera
Sialkot
TIBET
Lahore
Kangara
Kalanaur
Jalandar
Pakpattan
Sarhind
Multan
Ambala
Samana
Kalat
Panipat
Bhakkar
Bikaner
Hisar
Delhi
Narnaul
Jhajhar
Koil
Sambhal
Badaun
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Mathura
Agra
Bilgram
Jodhpur
Merta
Kanauj
Amarkot
Sunel
Ajmer
Ranthambhor
Dauhrua
Ghazipur
Banarasa
Chausa
Hajipur
Gauhati
Tnalta
Siwana
Gwalior
Kalpi
Abu
Chittor
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Chunar
Sasaram
Rohtasgarh
Khalgaon
Rajmahal
Udaipur
Rewa
Teliagarhi
Tanda
Gaur
EAST BANGAL
GUJARAT
Anhilwara
Salangar
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Raisino
Chinsura
Pecca
Sonargaon
Cambay
Champaner
Mandu
Chatgaon
Surat
KHANDESH
Sirgarh
Gwaligarh
Illichpur
BURMA
BARAR
Daultabad
GONDWANA
Cuttac
ORISSA
Ahmadnagar
Puri
ARABIAN SEA
AHMADNAGAR
Kolyani
GOLKUNDA
BAY OF BANGAL
BIJAPUR
Bidar
Golkunda
Bijapur
Gulbarga
Rajamundry
Raichur
Vijayanagar
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE
Kanchi
ANDAMANS
Tanjore
Madura
CEYLON
Boundary of the Empire.
Independent Kingdoms.
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without reducing them to thorough subjection. His policy towards the chiefs of Rajasthan has been admirably described by Dr. Qanungo in these words : "In Rajasthan Sher Shah made no attempt to uproot the local chiefs or reduce them to thorough subjection as he had done in other parts of Hindustan. He found the task dangerous as well as fruitless. He did not aim at the complete subversion of their independence but their political and geographical isolation from one another, so as to make any general upheaval against the empire impossible. In short, it was something like a British occupation in the north-western frontier tribal territories, which is meant less for gain than for the safety of the Indian empire." So he established garrisons of troops in important strategic places and kept a strict control over the lines of communication connecting Rajasthan with other parts of the empire. Ajmer, Jodhpur, Mount Abu and Chittor were fortified and held by Afghan troops.

The conquest of Bundelkhand ; death of Sher Shah (May 1545)

Immediately after the consummation of the successful campaign in Rajasthan Sher Shah marched on Kalinjar. Raja Birbhan Baghela of Rewa, who was summoned to court, had taken refuge with Raja Kirat Singh of Kalinjar. Kirat Singh turned down Sher Shah's request to surrender the fugitive, and thus gave offence to the Afghan monarch. In order to chastise him, Sher Shah marched on Kalinjar and besieged the fort (November 1544). Inspite of all possible exertion, the strong fortress could not be captured and the siege protracted for about a year. At length, Sher Shah saw no way except to make an attempt to blow up the walls of the fort. Accordingly, orders were given to dig mines and to build a high tower for mounting a battery. At the same time arrangements were made to erect covered lanes (*sabat*) in order to afford protection to the attackers. These were ready, and the tower erected was so high that the interior of the fort could be easily seen from its top. On 22nd May, 1545, Sher Shah ordered an assault on the fort and himself advanced to the attack. He ascended the tower and ordered his men to bring a supply of rockets in order to throw them into the fort. One of the rockets when fired against the gate of the town, rebounded and fell into a heap of ammunition lying near the place where Sher Shah was standing. There was a huge explosion and Sher Shah was most severely burnt. He was immediately carried to his tent, but he ordered his men to continue the attack. The assault succeeded and

the fort of Kalinjar was taken by storm at about sunset. When news of the capture of the fort and the slaughter of the garrison was reported to Sher Shah "marks of joy and satisfaction appeared on his countenance....." Soon after this he expired (22nd May, 1545).

ADMINISTRATION

Sher Shah a reformer, not an innovator

The administration of Sher Shah has of late been a subject of controversy. About 35 years ago, scholars of medieval Indian history considered Sher Shah to be primarily a soldier and only secondarily an administrator of average ability. Although as early as 1854 Erskine had shown in his scholarly work, entitled *History of India Under the First Two Sovereigns of the House of Timur*, Volume II, that Sher Shah had more the spirit of a legislator and guardian of his people than that of a successful military adventurer, students of history did not fully revise their opinion about him till Dr. K. R. Qanungo, in his scholarly monograph, completely exploded earlier theories about this Afghan ruler and propounded a new one that he was a greater constructive genius and a better nation-builder than even Akbar the Great. During the last thirties of the present century, a reaction has set in and some scholars, notably Dr. R. P. Tripathi and Dr. P. Saran, have opined, after an examination of Sher Shah's institutions, that his achievements had been very much exaggerated and that he was in fact a reformer and not an innovator. Opinion has now veered round that though Sher Shah was, without doubt, one of the greatest administrators of medieval India, he did not create new institutions ; he only administered the old institutions in a new spirit, and in this task attained so much success that he almost transformed the medieval Indian administration and made it serve the interest of the people. He created no new ministry ; his administrative divisions and sub-divisions were borrowed from the past, and so also the titles of his officers. His military reforms were those of Ala-ud-din Khalji, even his revenue administration was not really new and original. But he breathed a new spirit in these old institutions and turned them into instruments of popular good.

The extent of his empire

Before Sher Shah conquered Delhi he had brought the provinces of Bangal and Bihar under his possession. Within a few years of

his final victory over Humayun, his empire embraced practically the whole of northern India, except Assam, Kashmir and Gujarat. It extended from Sonargaon (now in East Bangal) in the east to the Gakkhar country in the north-west. In the north it was bounded by the Himalayas and in the south by the Vindhya Mountains. The empire included most of the Panjab up to the river Indus and Multan and Sindh. In the south it comprised Rajputana (*minus* Jaisalmer), Malwa and Bundelkhand. Kalyan Mal of Bikaner had recognised his suzerainty and got this state back from Maldeva, after the latter's defeat early in 1544. Gujarat was, however, not included as Sher Shah had made no attempt to conquer it.

The central administration

Like all rulers of the Sultanate of Delhi Sher Shah was a despot and possessed almost unlimited powers. But, unlike his predecessors, he was a benevolent despot, exercising power for the benefit of the people. Still all the strings of policy and civil and military powers were concentrated in his hands. His ministers were in charge of the daily routine work of administration, and had no authority to initiate policy or to propose radical change in the mode of transacting business or in the administrative set-up. It was not humanly possible for one man to look after the interest of such a huge empire without the assistance of ministers. Consequently, Sher Shah had four ministries after the model of the Sultanate period. They were : (1) *Diwan-i-Wizarat*, (2) *Diwan-i-Ariz*, (3) *Diwan-i-Rasalat*, and (4) *Diwan-i-Insha*. Besides them there were minor officers, two (the chief *qazi* and the head of the news department) of whom enjoyed fairly high rank and are placed by some writers in the category of ministers. It will, thus, be seen that the machinery of the central government under Sher Shah was exactly the same as under earlier sultans of Delhi from the time of the so-called Slave kings to the end of those of the Tughluqs.

The head of the *Diwan-i-Wizarat* may be called the *Wazir*. He was the minister of revenue and finance and was, therefore, in charge of the income and expenditure of the empire. Besides, he exercised a general supervisory authority over other ministers. As Sher Shah had intimate knowledge of the working of the revenue department, he took an enlightened interest in the affairs of the department. We have it on the authority of the historians of the age of Akbar that Sher Shah daily looked into the abstract of income and expenditure

of his kingdom and made enquiries about the state of finances and the arrears due from the parganas.

The *Diwan-i-Ariz* was under the *Ariz-i-Mamalik*, who, in modern phraseology, may be designated the army minister. He was not the commander-in-chief of the army, but was in charge of its recruitment, organisation and discipline. He had to make arrangements for payment of the salaries of the troops and officers and to look after the disposition of the army on the field of battle. But, as Sher Shah was personally interested in the military department, he very often interfered with the work of the *Diwan-i-Ariz*. We are told by the chronicles of the time that he was present at the enlistment of fresh recruits and he fixed the salary of individual soldiers and looked after their welfare.

The third ministry was the *Diwan-i-Rasalat* or *Diwan-i-Muhtasib*. The minister in charge of this department may be called foreign minister. His duty was to be in close touch with the ambassadors and envoys sent to and received from foreign states. He must also have been in charge of diplomatic correspondence, and sometimes the charity and endowment department, too, was placed under him.

The fourth ministry was known as *Diwan-i-Insha*. The minister in charge of this department had to draft royal proclamations and despatches. His duty was also to communicate with governors and other local executive officers. Government records, too, were in his charge.

The other departments which were sometimes reckoned as ministries were *Diwan-i-Qaza* and *Diwan-i-Barid*. The chief *qazi* was the head of the first. He had to supervise the administration of justice besides deciding cases, whether in the first instance or appeals from the court of provincial *qazis*. The *Barid-i-Mamalik* was the head of the Intelligence department, and it was his duty to report every important incident to the king. He had a host of news-writers and spies who were posted in towns, markets and in every important locality. He also made arrangements for the posting of news-carriers at various places to carry the royal *dak*.

There seems to have been a high official in charge of the royal household and the various workshops attached to it. He may be called the Lord High Steward. His duty was to administer the king's household department and to keep watch over crowds of

servants attached to it. He was very near the royal person and, therefore, enjoyed a high prestige.

Provincial administration

There are two theories about the administrative divisions of the empire during the reign of Sher Shah. Dr. Qanungo is of opinion that Sher Shah had no higher division than the *sarkar* and that the provinces and provincial governors were the creation of Akbar. Dr. Saran, however, differs from this view and maintains that Sher Shah did have large military governorships and that there existed provinces in India long before the reign of Akbar. Neither of these theories is absolutely correct. Throughout the Sultanate period, including the reign of Sher Shah and his son Islam Shah, there were administrative divisions corresponding to provinces, but they were not uniform in size or income. They were not called *subas* or provinces, but were known as *iqtas* which were assigned to important chiefs. Besides these there were numerous autonomous Hindu states which had chosen to accept the position of vassalage under the sultans of Delhi. Such states and the *iqtas* did not enjoy a uniform political status and were not governed by the same system of administration. But while during the reigns of earlier sultans of Delhi the control of the central government over them was nominal, under Sher Shah it was substantial and strict. It will, thus, be seen that there were military governorships in the time of Sher Shah, such as those of Lahore, the Panjab, Malwa and Ajmer. The officials in charge of these provinces were commanders of large armies. At the same time, Sher Shah established a new type of provincial administration in Bangal, which he divided into a number of *sarkars*, placing each in charge of an Afghan officer. At the head of the entire province he placed a civilian with a small army under his command. His principal duty was to supervise the work of the officers of the *sarkars* and to settle their disputes. This was done to guard against rebellion. All the other provinces had governors and a few other officers who seem to have enjoyed the same designation in various provinces, barring which there was no uniformity in their administrative machinery or method. In fact, we have no means of ascertaining the names and number of officers appointed to various provinces; nor do we know whether the governor was authorised to appoint his colleagues or they were appointed by Sher Shah himself. In short, the provincial administration under Sher Shah was not so well organised as that under Akbar or even as his own *sarkars* or *parganas*.

Sarkars (districts)

Every province was divided into a number of *sarkars* (districts). There were two chief officers in every *sarkar*, viz., chief *shiqdar* (*Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran*) and chief *munsif* (*Munsif-i-Munsifan*). The first was a grandee of considerable importance and had a respectable force under his command. His duties were to maintain law and order in the district and to undertake expeditions against rebellious zamindars. He was also required to supervise the work of *shiqdars* of the *parganas* in his districts. The chief *munsif* was primarily a judge. He had to decide civil cases. But at the same time, he seems to have been a supervisor of the work of the *amins* in the *parganas*. Both these officers must have had big official establishments with scores of clerks and accountants to help them in the discharge of their duties.

Parganas

Each *sarkar* comprised a number of *parganas* which were the lowest units of administration. Sher Shah appointed one *shiqdar*, one *amin* or *munsif*, one *fotadar* (treasurer) and two *karkuns* (writers) in every *pargana*. Besides these, there was a *qanungo* who was a semi-government official and was a repository of knowledge about the revenue affairs of the *pargana*. The *shiqdar* was a military officer in charge of a small contingent of troops and was charged with the duty of maintenance of peace. He was required to assist the *amin* and to punish rebellious people. The *amin's* duty was to conduct survey and to make arrangements for the settlement of land revenue. The *fotadar* was the treasurer of the *pargana*. The *karkuns* kept accounts, one in Persian and the other in Hindi.

Sher Shah wisely recognised the autonomous village communities and maintained touch with them through the village officials, namely, the *patwari* and the *chowkidar*. Every village of consequence constituted a commonwealth. There was a *panchayat* consisting of the elders of the village which made arrangements for watch and ward, elementary education, sanitation, irrigation and other matters. The *panchayat* also settled disputes.

Army

Although he had begun his life as a civilian, Sher Shah realised the importance of an efficient military establishment. Like other Afghan kings, he invited Afghans from all parts of the country as well as from Afghanistan and gave them posts suitable to their status and ability. His army, therefore, consisted mostly of Afghans. But there

were troops of other nationalities also, including Hindus. Realising that a feudal army was inefficient he followed Ala-ud-din's policy of establishing a permanent standing army which was paid partly by grant of *jagir* and partly in cash from the royal treasury, but in all cases officered and commanded by competent men selected and appointed by Sher Shah himself. The chronicles tell us that Sher Shah took personal interest in the army and recruited troops and fixed the salary of individual soldiers by careful personal observation of individual recruits. It could be possible only for the troops who were enlisted at the capital ; but he must have permitted his officers in the provincial capitals to enlist troops without reference to him. Sher Shah revived Ala-ud-din's practice of branding horses in order to prevent the troops from selling away the government horses and bringing in their places worthless ponies at the time of musters. Besides, he instituted the practice of recording the descriptive roll of every soldier so to do away with the practice of sending proxies at the time of military review or battle. As a result of these reforms much of the corruption was eliminated and the army became a powerful instrument of force. The relation between the individual trooper and his immediate officer was changed "from one of personal attachment into something like an official tie". Promotion of the troops depended upon their merit and the actual service performed, and was not left to the caprice of the commanding officer, though his recommendation was duly taken into consideration by the sultan. It is wrongly supposed that Sher Shah abolished the jagir system and paid salaries of the officers and troops in cash. While the troops were generally paid in cash, the officers and nobles continued to enjoy jagirs as before. Sher Shah, however, introduced one healthy reform : it was that of paying his troops individually and not through the commanding officers or nobles.

Sher Shah's army consisted chiefly of cavalry ; but he had infantry also which was armed with muskets. He possessed a large part of artillery consisting of guns and cannon of various calibre and efficiency. His musketry was famous for its efficiency. At his capital he had 1,50,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry armed with matchlocks and 300 elephants who were always kept in readiness for service. Besides this, there were contingents of troops posted at strategic places all over his kingdom. The total strength of his army cannot be accurately ascertained. It may, however, be surmised that the strength of the provincial armies must have been equal to that stationed at the

capital. There was no regular training or drill in those days. Regimental discipline was also unknown. But Sher Shah divided his army into divisions, each under a veteran commander. As he took personal interest in the organisation, equipment and discipline of his forces and allowed his troops to come into close contact with him, raw recruits were transformed into good soldiers within a year or so of their enlistment. Transport and commissariat arrangements were left to the soldiers and commanders. Nothing like the arrangements of our time existed in the medieval age. *Banjaras* or roving grain merchants provided provisions, and all other necessities could easily be had, as merchants invariably accompanied the medieval armies.

Finance

The revenue of the empire was derived from several sources and may be divided into two main classes—(1) central revenue and (2) local revenue. The local revenue was derived from a variety of taxes called *abwabs* which were levied on production and consumption of various trades and professions and most of them on transport. The sources of central revenue were heirless property, commerce, mint, presents, inheritance, salt, customs, *jizya* (poll tax), *khams* and land revenue. The state charged duty on the transport of raw materials and finished goods. The royal mint was also a source of profit. All unclaimed property and the effects of deceased persons who left no heirs passed to the state. All vassals and nobles, officials and visitors were required to make present to the ruler, which constituted a lucrative source of profit to the state. Salt yielded much money. *Jizya* or poll tax, which was realised from the Hindus, was a very profitable source of income. *Khams*, or one-fifth of the plunder taken during the time of war, went to the royal treasury. It brought in a huge income to the state. The main source of the government revenue, however, was the tax from land and was known as land revenue.

The land revenue administration of Sher Shah was a great improvement upon that of the Sultanate period and constituted his chief title to fame. He had a first-hand knowledge of the working of the revenue system in his father's *jagir* in Bihar. On his accession he introduced the system which he had worked out in detail in Sasaram and Khawaspur Tanda. /The land was measured according to a uniform system and that under cultivation was ascertained for each village. All cultivable land was divided into three classes, good, middle and

bad, and the produce of each kind of land was ascertained. It was then added up and divided by three in order to find out the average produce per *bigha* of land. One-third of the produce was fixed as the state share. The government revenue could be paid either in cash or kind; but the former mode was preferred. The state's share was commuted into cash on the basis of the current prices of corn. There seems to have been a separate schedule for each locality and a separate schedule for each kind of corn. One uniform schedule of average produce of land was an impossibility for the simple reason that the quality of land and its produce differed from locality to locality. Similarly, there must have been different price-rates in different localities for the conversion of the state's share of the produce into cash. The state gave *putta* (title deed) to each cultivator, specifying the state demand, that is, revenue that he was required to pay. Every cultivator was required to sign a *qabuliat* (deed of agreement) signifying his assent to pay the amount of revenue mentioned. Both the documents contained a specification of the plots and their areas in the possession of a cultivator. It is too much to think that Sher Shah established a uniform method of assessment throughout his dominions. We know from recorded evidence that he made exception in the case of Multan where he did not insist on the survey of land. Similarly, it would not have been possible for him to have introduced survey in Rajasthan. It is, therefore, reasonable to hold that all the three modes of assessment were allowed to prevail as before. They were (1) *ghallabakhshi* or *batai*, (2) *nasq* or *muktai* or *kankut*, (3) *naqdi* or *zabti* or *jamai*. *Batai* means sharing the produce with the peasant, and this mode of determining the state's share seems to have been primitive and popular in all ages. *Batai* is of three kinds: *khet-batai*, *lank-batai* and *rasi-batai*. The first means the determination of the landlord's share while crop is standing in the field or immediately after the field has been sown, by a division of the field itself. According to the second (*lank-batai*), the peasant reaps the corn and brings it to the threshing ground where it is divided between him and the landlord without the grain being separated from the husk. The third (*rasi-batai*) means dividing the grain after it has been separated from the husk. *Nasq* or *kankut* implies a rough estimate of the produce of the soil. It is a cumbrous and disadvantageous mode of assessment for the cultivator. *Naqdi* or *jamai* or *zabti* is a sort of contract between the individual peasant and the government or the *zamindar*, as the case may be, which fixes the rate of the rent per

bigha of land per year, irrespective of crops or total produce, for three years or more. The rate depends upon the fertility of the soil and its situation. The tenant is at liberty to raise more than one crop a year, and he can expect no remission for the failure of crop owing to a draught, excessive rain or any other natural calamity. Nor is the rent enhanced during the period of contract, even if the crops raised are far more rich than the average. Of the three systems *naqdi* or *jamai* has always been preferred by the peasants and *kankut* is the least liked by them. Over and above the land revenue proper (1/3rd of the produce), the peasantry was required to contribute towards the maintenance and fees of the surveyors of land and the collectors of revenue when they were on active duty. This additional charge was known as *jaribana* (surveyors' fee) and *mahasilana* (tax-collectors' fee) and probably it ranged from 2½% to 5% of revenue paid by each cultivator. In addition to these every cultivator was required to pay an additional cess of 2½% of the entire revenue payable by him. It was something like an insurance fund which was realised in kind. The grain so collected was stored in state granaries and was sold at a cheap price in times of famine or other natural calamity.

Sher Shah had great solicitude for the welfare of the peasantry. No other ruler of medieval India, except Firoz Tughluq, attempted to safeguard the interests of the teeming millions as this Pathan king who believed that the state was invariably benefitted by the favour shown to the agriculturists. He gave standing orders to his officers to be lenient at the time of assessment and to be strict at the time of collection of revenue. He never failed to punish those who oppressed the peasantry and made due compensation, if during the course of the march of his army standing crops were trodden under or damaged on account of any other reason.

The main defect of the system was that in charging one-third of the average produce of the three kinds of land the third category of land was over-charged, while the first category was under-charged. But, as Moreland says, the inequality might probably have adjusted itself "by variations in the crops grown". Secondly, the state demand of one-third of the produce together with the fees of the surveyors and collectors and the additional cess of 2½% constituted a fairly high charge. Thirdly, the settlement, being annual, must have caused some kind of inconvenience to the cultivators as well as to the government officials. Fourthly, it is idle to expect that all corruption in

the revenue department had altogether disappeared. Service in this department was more lucrative than in other departments, and Sher Shah transferred his officers every one or two years to give a chance "to a large number of men to share the benefits and profits of *amildari*". Fifthly, the *jagir* system continued to exist and it seems hardly credible that *jagirdars* were not allowed to manage their *jagirs* through their agents. As there were *jagirs* in every part of the kingdom, cultivators in *jagir* areas must have naturally suffered.

But, on the whole, the tillers of the soil must not have suffered much, as Sher Shah was personally anxious to advance their interest and severely punished all those who oppressed or harassed them in any way. He practically eliminated the authority of the intermediary headman, if he did not do away with them altogether. In fact, he established a direct relation between the individual cultivator and the state. His revenue system was *rayatwari*, not *zamindari*.

The main items of expenditure were the royal household and the civil and military establishments. A considerable portion of the income must have been spent on building projects and on the construction of roads, *sarais* and other works of public utility. As Sher Shah was engaged in military campaigns throughout his reign, he must have spent large amounts of money on his wars. Charitable institutions also must have taken their due share of the royal income. The 'charity kitchens', alone, as we have pointed out elsewhere, cost to the exchequer Rs. 18,25,000 a year.

Currency

Sher Shah's next outstanding achievement was in the field of currency reform. He found on his accession that the currency system had practically broken down for want of specie, the debasement of the current coins and the absence of a fixed ratio between the coins of various metals. There was another difficulty, namely, that coins of all previous reigns, in fact of all ages, were allowed to circulate as legal tender. Sher Shah took steps to issue a large number of new silver coins which, subsequently, became known as *dam*. Both the silver rupee and the copper *dam* had their halves, quarters, eighths and sixteenths. Next, he abolished all old and mixed metal currency. He fixed a rate between the copper and silver coins. His silver rupee weighed 180 grains of which 175 grains were pure silver. This rupee *minus* its inscription lasted throughout the Mughal period and was retained by the English East India Company upto 1835. V.A. Smith

rightly observes : it "is the basis of the existing British currency" (upto 1947). Sher Shah's name and title and the place of mint were invariably inscribed on the coins in Arabic character. Some of his coins bore his name in Devanagari script and some had the names of the first four Khalifas in addition. Gold coins of pure metal of various weights, such as 166·4 grains, 167 grains and 168·5 grains, were executed. The ratio of exchange between the *dam* and the rupee was 64 to 1. The ratios between the various gold coins and the silver ones were fixed on a permanent basis. These currency reforms proved very useful and did away with a great deal of inconvenience which was experienced by the general public and particularly by the trading community. These reforms have elicited high praise from modern numismatists. Edward Thomas, for example, observes that Sher Shah's reign "constitutes an important test-point in the annals of Indian coinage, not only in its specific mint reforms but also as correcting the progressive deteriorations of the previous kings, and as introducing many of those reforms which the succeeding Mughuls claimed as their own."

Trade and commerce

Sher Shah greatly encouraged commerce by abolishing numerous duties that were charged on the boundaries of every province, every district, and, in fact, at every ferry and every prominent road. He laid down that only two duties should be charged on the transport of goods intended for sale. One duty was charged when the mercantile commodities entered the frontier of his kingdom at Sonargaon in East Bangal or at Rohtasgarh in the Panjab or at any other frontier, and the other at the place of its sale. We do not know the exact amount charged ; it seems probable that the tax was $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the price of the articles. All internal customs houses were abolished. This reforms encouraged trade and commerce and brought about a great commercial prosperity.

Justice

Sher Shah is reputed to be a just medieval ruler. His reputation was based not only on his personal solicitude for the welfare of his subjects but also on his efficient system of administration of justice. In accordance with the immemorial custom he himself tried both appeals and initial cases. He held court in the evening of Wednesday. Next to him was the chief *qazi* of the kingdom who was the head of the department of justice and was responsible for its

administration. The chief *qazi's* court was primarily an appellate court, but cases in the first instance, too, were decided by it. There was a *qazi* in every district and perhaps in all the important cities. The chief *munsif* was responsible for administering civil justice in the district, while the *amins* discharged the same duty in the *parganas*. Probably *qazis* tried the criminal cases, while the *munsifs* and *amins* civil cases. There was another judicial dignitary called *Mir Adl*.

Sher Shah was inspired by high ideals of justice. He was very particular in giving all protection to the poor and the weak and to save them from oppression and injustice. He invariably followed the principle of being more severe in the cases of government officials or highly-placed persons than for smaller and poorer persons. Moreover, he showed no preference even for his near relatives in the matter of administering justice. An anecdote is recorded how he inflicted a condign punishment on his nephew who had thrown a betel leaf at the wife of a goldsmith who was taking her bath in the enclosure of her house. This incident occurred while the prince was passing by the house on his elephant. Inspite of the remonstrance of his nobles Sher Shah did not desist from inflicting the punishment. Similar other instances of Sher Shah's careful and impartial justice are on record. Shujaat Khan, governor of Malwa, had unjustly withheld a part of the jagirs of 2,000 soldiers. When Sher Shah heard about it he ordered due punishment, although Shujaat Khan had, meanwhile, rectified his mistake by restoring the jagirs. It has already been mentioned that Sher Shah was particularly solicitous for the welfare of the peasantry and that he made due compensation for the injury done to their crops during the course of the march of his army. The reputation of Sher Shah as a just king survived long after his death and the downfall of his dynasty. Nizamuddin Ahmad, author of *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, wrote in the last quarter of the sixteenth century that during Sher Shah's reign a merchant could travel and sleep in the desert, without any fear of being robbed of his merchandise. So great was Sher Shah's fear and his love of justice that the very robbers and thieves kept watch over the merchants' goods.

Police

There was no separate department of police in the time of Sher Shah. The army was required to discharge a double duty, namely, protecting the country from foreign invasions and internal disturbances, and keeping peace between man and man. The *chief shiqdar's*

duty was to maintain peace and order in the *sarkar*. In fact he was the guardian of peace in his jurisdiction. The *shiqdar* in the *pargana* exercised the same function. These officers were required to keep a strict watch on thieves, robbers and other bad characters in their respective areas and to punish them. So far as villages were concerned, Sher Shah introduced the principle of local responsibility and made the headman of the village responsible for all the crimes committed in his village. The headman was given time to produce the culprit or to make good the loss due to theft or robbery. If he failed to do so he was put to death. If the crime was committed on the border of more than one village the headmen of the villages concerned were reponsible for the detection of the crime and for making good the loss. The system was based on the correct knowledge of the rural psychology and the condition of the people of medieval times. As a general rule, the headman of a village was well-acquainted with the bad characters of his village and hardly any offence occurred without his knowledge. But the punishment of death for failure to trace the culprit seems too severe in our eyes. Dr. Qanungo, however, justifies it, for he says that it was well suited for the age that was medieval.

Medieval historians are all praise for Sher Shah's police administration. Abbas Sarwani writes : "Travellers and way-farers during the time of Sher Shah's reign were relieved from the trouble of keeping watch, nor did they fear to halt in the midst of a desert. They encamped at night at every place, desert or inhabited, without any fear ; they placed their goods and property on the plain and turned out their mules to graze, and they slept with minds at ease and free from care, as if in their own houses, and the zamindars for fear any mischief should occur to the travellers, and that they should suffer to be arrested on account of it, kept watch over them. And in the time of Sher Shah's rule a decrepit old woman might place a basket full of gold ornaments on her head and go on a journey and no thief or robber would come near her, for fear of punishment which Sher Shah inflicted." (*Elliot*, Vol. IV, pp. 432-433).

We know little about the police arrangements in the cities. There must have been an officer corresponding to the *kotwal* of the Mughul age in every important town to maintain peace and to keep unruly people in check. The capital city must have been provided with a suitable police administration. We are, however, ignorant of the precise details.

Roads and Sarais

Sher Shah was a great road-maker. Following in the footsteps of the ancient Hindu kings, he constructed many roads in order to connect his capital with the various parts of his dominions. Four of his roads are well-known. One, which ran from Sonargaon in East Bangal through Agra, Delhi and Lahore to the Indus, was 1,500 *kos* in length. It was known as *Sarak-i-Azam* and might be identified with the modern Grand Trunk Road. The second ran from Agra to Burhanpur, a third from Agra to Jodhpur and Chittor, and a fourth from Lahore to Multan. All the roads were well-planned and connected important towns of the country through which they passed. On either side of the roads Sher Shah planted fruit-trees. Along the roads were built 1,700 *caravan sarais* with separate quarters for Hindus and Muslims. Provision was made to station horses for the servants of the postal or news department. Each *sarai* had a well and a mosque with an *imam* and a *muazzin*. There was a police official (*shiqdar*) posted at every *sarai* for keeping peace and preventing crime. Besides being useful for travellers, the *sarais* were particularly meant to serve as rest-houses for the servants and runners of the postal department who carried the royal mail. They were provided ration and, as this class comprised both Hindus and Muslims, there were separate arrangements for their food. Some land in the vicinity of each *sarai* was endowed for its maintenance. In the words of Dr. Qanungo these *sarais* were "veritable arteries of the empire" and the roads and *sarais* were "essential to the success of Sher Shah's administration, characterised as it was by frequent transfer of officials, prompt discharge of business and constant marching and re-marching of troops." The roads and *sarais* were useful not only for the transport of troops but they also served the purpose of *dak chaukis* of postal department, supplying the government with news from distant parts of the kingdom. The system was not new to this country, but it was revived and improved by Sher Shah.

Intelligence department

Sher Shah revived the *dak chauki* and the espionage system of Alauddin Khalji. He appointed the officer known as *Darogha-i-Dak Chauki* as the head of this department. Hosts of news-writers and news-carriers were employed under him to furnish news of important happenings from every part of the empire. As has been stated, the

royal *dak* was carried by runners posted at the *sarais*. Sher Shah kept himself in touch with every part of his kingdom through the intelligence department. Daily reports of the prices of things also reached the king. News-runners and spies were posted in all important towns and bazars with instructions to transmit to the court whatever information they thought necessary to be placed before the king. This department worked so efficiently that Sher Shah got news of dissatisfaction of soldiers employed in the provinces and rebellious intentions of the zamindars and bigger vassals before these became known in the areas concerned. The case of Shujaat Khan's unjustly withholding a part of the *jagirs* of his 2,000 soldiers and the latter's dissatisfaction which reached Sher Shah through his spies even before Shujaat Khan could know of it is an instance in point. Much of the success of Sher Shah's administration was due to the efficiency of his spy system.

Religious policy

Modern scholars hold divergent views about Sher Shah's religious policy. Dr. Qanungo credits him with following an enlightened policy of toleration towards the Hindus. According to him his attitude towards Hinduism "was not contemptuous sufferance but respectful deference." Prof. Sri Ram Sharma, on the other hand, contends that in his religious views and conduct Sher Shah did not rise above the Turko-Afghan rulers of the Sultanate of Delhi. It is admitted by all, including the two historians referred to, that in his private life Sher Shah was an orthodox Sunni Musalman. He was punctilious in saying his five daily prayers, in keeping the fast of *Ramzan* and in going through various observances enjoined by his faith. He was, moreover, an upholder of the dignity and supremacy of Islam in this country. On more than one occasion he successfully exploited the religious feelings of his Muslim followers by declaring a *holy war* against Rajput kings. His war against Puran Mal of Raisin was undertaken to punish him for his 'excess' against Islam and it was officially termed as 'jihad'. His expedition against Maldeva of Jodhpur, though dictated by political and military motives, was, nevertheless, coloured by religious sentiments, and after his victory Sher Shah demolished temples in the fort at Jodhpur and built a mosque on their site. Similarly, in the siege of Kalinjar he did give vent to religious intolerance. It will not be correct to say that Sher Shah was altogether free from religious bias or that his attitude

towards Hinduism was one of "respectful deference". At the same time, it is a mistake to place him in the category of the sultans of the pre-Mughal period, who, with a few notable exceptions, looked upon Hindus as an inferior people and their religion not worthy of recognition or toleration. Sher Shah's personal feelings and views apart, he was, on the whole, a tolerant ruler and did not think it wise to follow a policy of religious persecution. He left Hindus undisturbed and allowed them to follow their own religion without let or hindrance. As far as possible, he did not mix religion with politics. Leaving aside cases of exhibition of bigotry during a campaign against a Hindu king no attempt was made throughout his reign to break images or to demolish temples or to carry on an organised propaganda against the Hindus. Although the employment of Hindus in the army and the revenue department need not be taken as an evidence of his policy of tolerance (as Hindus had been employed in these departments since the establishment of the Arab rule in Sindh in the eighth century A.D. owing to political and administrative necessity), a large portion of Sher Shah's infantry was composed of Hindus. Most of the subordinate officers employed in the revenue and intelligence departments must have been Hindus. In normal circumstances, therefore, Sher Shah may be said to have been tolerant towards the religion of the vast majority of his subjects.

Buildings

Sher Shah was a great builder. Anxious to strengthen the defence of his north-west frontier, he built a magnificent fort on the Jhelam and named it Rohtasgarh. Dr. Qanungo says that he wanted to build a fort in every *sarkar* and to convert the mud sarais into brick buildings so as to make them serve as block-houses for the protection of the highways. But this work could not be accomplished owing to the shortness of his reign. The *Purana Qila* at Delhi is said to have been built by Sher Shah and he erected a lofty mosque inside its enclosure, which is considered to be a good example of the Indo-Islamic architecture. According to Fergusson, it is "the most perfect of his (Sher Shah's) buildings". The best example of Sher Shah's architecture is his own mausoleum at Sasaram in Bihar. It is a grand architecture of its kind in the country. "The short-lived and unstable Sur dynasty," writes V. A. Smith, "of which Sher Shah was the most distinguished member, had such a hard fight for existence

that it could not have been expected to pay much attention to architecture. Nevertheless several meritorious buildings are due to the Sur dynasty, and the mausoleum of Sher Shah at Sasaram, built on a lofty plinth in the midst of a lake, is one of the best designed and most beautiful buildings in India, unequalled among the early buildings in the northern provinces for grandeur and dignity. Cunningham was half-inclined to prefer it to even the Taj.....The style may be described as intermediate between the austerity of the Tughluq buildings and the feminine grace of Shah Jahan's masterpiece." (*History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, pp. 405-406). According to Havel this mausoleum is a portrait of Sher Shah's personality and character. Dr. Qanungo adds that while the outer portion of the building, which is rather rough, indicates the frowning exterior of Sher Shah's character, its beautiful interior "speaks of a heart overflowing with kindness." Percy Brown also lavishes praise on Sher Shah's buildings for their exquisite design, excellent execution and artistic decoration. He considers the Sur style of architecture not only as a substantial improvement on that of the Sayyids and the Lodis, but also as the basis of the grand and more dignified architecture of the Mughuls.

Sher Shah's character and estimate

His daily routine. Sher Shah was the only Muslim sultan of northern India who rose to sovereignty without having in his early life any substantial connection with the court of Delhi. He began his career as a civilian manager of his father's *jagir*, and by sheer dint of merit rose to be the emperor of Hindustan. No ruler in India before or after him possessed at the time of his accession to the throne such intimate knowledge of all branches of administration as this Pathan monarch. Sher Shah became king at the ripe age of sixty-eight. Although he is said to have remarked that God had granted him sovereignty in the evening of his life, age had not cooled his ambition and he manifested a physical and intellectual activity that could well be an object of emulation for a youth of twenty-five. Historians are unanimous in their testimony to the fact that he devoted more than sixteen hours a day to the business of the State. Like Asoka or Chandragupta Maurya before him and Akbar after him, he believed in the motto that "It behoves the great to be always active." Both Abbas Sarwani and Rizaq-ullah Mushtaqi tell us that it was Sher Shah's habit to get up after two-thirds of the

night were passed. After ablution and prayer he would sit down to attend to the business of the State. First of all, secretaries of various departments came and read their reports about the occurrences in their respective departments. "For four hours he listened to the reading of reports on affairs of the country or on the condition of government establishments. Orders that he gave were reduced to writing, and were issued and acted upon; there was no need for further discussion. Thus he remained busy till the morning (*fajar*) arrived." (*Waqayat-i-Mushtaqi* in *Elliot*, Vol. IV, p. 550). After the morning prayer, he went out for an inspection of the army. Musters of troops were held in his presence. Fresh recruits were enlisted, their descriptive rolls taken down and horses branded. Then came the time for breakfast. That over, he held *darbar* and there openly transacted business till mid-day. The main work that engaged his attention was receiving nobles and vassals and envoys from foreign courts. He also inspected the revenue received from various *parganas* and looked into the accounts of income and expenditure. Then he sat down for another prayer at noon and retired for rest. Unless an important business needed his personal attention he spent his evenings in reading the Quran and in the company of learned men. This was the daily routine of his life. There was hardly any deviation from it whether Sher Shah was at his capital or engaged in a military campaign.

As a man. Not having been born in the purple and having had to make his way in life through adversity, Sher Shah did not possess the culture and personal charm of a born aristocrat. Moreover, we now know from *Tarikh-i-Daulat-i-Sher Shahi* of Hasan Ali Khan, a first-rate contemporary Persian authority, that in his youth Sher Shah was frivolous and his morals were those of a spoiled young man. He cannot be described as a dutiful son, for he had serious differences with his father who was passionately attached to his stepmother. Little is known about his attitude towards his mother. It may, however, be surmised that they might have had mutual attachment as fellow-sufferers due to the indifference of their guardian and head of the family. He does not seem to have had any devotion for his wives for which most of the Mughul rulers, though polygamous like him, have earned praise from posterity. Nor is there any evidence to show that he ever displayed special fondness for his children. It seems that his utilitarian outlook in his dealings with men and affairs stood in the way of his having any inordinate attachment for anyone.

Though well-educated and possessed of a good knowledge of Arabic and Persian and fond of history, Sher Shah could not, in any sense, be called a scholar. For him study of literature and history was not an end in itself. He cultivated them for their practical utility. He read the Quran every day, because it was necessary for a pious Muhammadan to do so. He was a patron of learned men in the sense in which other Turko-Afghan sultans of Delhi were, but no scholar at his court produced any outstanding work of history, politics, economics or even theology, to say nothing of the sciences. Modern scholars have praised him for his patronage of learning without caring to find out whether it proved efficacious in spreading learning and producing works of merit.* He was, however, a great builder, and his style of architecture was an improvement on that of his predecessors.

As a soldier. As has been pointed out, Sher Shah was not a soldier by profession ; but as he was the son of a military commander and as it was essential for everybody in that age to learn to handle weapons of offence and defence for self-protection, Sher Shah must have received military training in his boyhood. His expeditions against the rebellious *zamindars* in his father's *jagir* show that he very well understood the work of a seasoned soldier and commander. As a soldier, he possessed cool courage, personal valour and extraordinary patience and activity. As a general, he invariably displayed consummate skill and cunning in every campaign. At every stage of his halt during a campaign, he invariably threw up redoubts and dug ditches by way of precaution against a surprise attack. Never did he make a frontal attack on his enemy. Tactics that he usually followed were to throw the enemy off his guard, to make a surprise attack to draw him away into an ambush and then to attack him simultaneously from more than one direction. His campaigns were characterised by rapidity of movements and by an attempt to gain a strategic advantage over his enemy. Unlike the Rajputs, he did not risk his all on the issue of a single battle except once, namely, in his contest with Maldeva of Jodhpur. Even there he quickly extricated himself by a cunning stratagem. Like all Turks and Afghans, he fought to win and believed that he could legitimately use any means, fair or foul, to attain his object. He was ever ready to share with his

* Malik Muhammad Jayasi, a notable writer who flourished during his time, was not known at his court and was not extended any patronage by Sher Shah.

soldiers the toils of a campaign and the joys and sorrows of fortune. He did not avoid their company but mixed with them on intimate terms. When Humayun's emissaries visited him on the eve of the battle of Chausa, they found him digging a trench with his sleeves rolled up, along with his troops. He had a leader's personal magnetism and was loyally served by his men.

As an administrator. Sher Shah was a constructive genius of a high order. Like Akbar, he combined in him the capacity of grasping broad original principles of administration with a knowledge of minute details. To him belonged the credit of not only reviving the old and tried institutions of the land, but also administering them successfully and even improving them by eliminating deficiencies and adding new elements. His re-organisation of administration, settlement of land revenue and currency and commercial reforms entitle him to the rank of one of the greatest administrators of the medieval age. The most remarkable thing about him as a ruler was the spirit in which his administration was made to function. The result was that the old institutions were, in actual practice, transformed to serve the larger interests of the people. Sher Shah was a successful statesman. He cleverly perceived the defects in the Mughul system of government and cleverly turned them to his advantage. He realised what the main elements of power in the country were and enlisted the support of almost all those elements in the furtherance of his own object. As far as the Afghans were concerned, he successfully curbed their tribal jealousies and kept their turbulence under proper check. He inspired them with a common ideology and ambition and made them place the national interests above those of the clan or the family. The Afghan individualistic tendency remained under check throughout his rule. No Afghan ruler had attained such a remarkable success in this difficult task as Sher Shah. As a ruler, he stood for the welfare of the people and worked hard to safeguard the interests of the peasantry. No oppression of any kind and no encroachment on the rights of agricultural community were tolerated and care was taken to compensate the peasantry for any damage or loss done to their crops. Though orthodox in his religious beliefs and practices and often exploiting the fanaticism of the Muslim soldiery in his wars against powerful Hindu kings, he did not show religious intolerance in his dealings with the Hindu subjects. There was enough of statesmanship in him not to mix religion with politics or administration. He had foreseen the impossibility of neglecting the Hindus, and,

therefore, sought their co-operation in the civil and military administration.

The most important trait in Sher Shah's character as a ruler was his love of justice. He used to say : "Justice is the most excellent of religious rites and it is approved alike by the kings of infidels and of the faithful." He looked upon it as his duty to ascertain the exact truth about the oppressed and the suitors for justice, and he invariably administered even-handed justice. He showed no leniency to oppressors even though they might have been his nobles or his near relations. The anecdote about his nephew's making an amorous advance towards the wife of a goldsmith at Agra and the punishment that Sher Shah inflicted on him has been given elsewhere. It might not be literally true ; nevertheless, it reflects popular tradition about Sher Shah's desire to do justice even though he might have to punish his own kinsmen.

Sher Shah followed in the footsteps of most of the kings of ancient India who pursued the benevolent policy of helping the poor and the disabled. A large amount of money was disbursed in charity. We are told that a register of the names of the poor people in the kingdom was maintained and arrangements were made for providing them with means of subsistence. Sher Shah established a 'charity kitchen' at the capital on which 500 *tolas* of gold were spent everyday. Whoever came to the court was fed. This charity alone cost the treasury Rs. 18,25,000 per year. An account has already been given of his roads with shade-giving fruit-trees and his *sarais* for the comfort of travellers. Humanitarian measures like these were designed to help the teeming millions, besides facilitating the transport of the royal armies and the expeditious conduct of the royal *dak*.

Sher Shah's success was so dazzling that most writers have failed to see the other side of his character. It is not generally realised that he was a cunning politician and that he often made use of guile and treachery in attaining his end. He acquired the fort of Chunar by questionable means. In flagrant violation of his plighted word he seized the fort of Rohtasgarh from its ruler. Like Aurangzeb after him he often had recourse of stratagem. He beat his rival Maldeva by forging letters and sowing dissensions among his chiefs. His rise was as much due to his intrinsic ability as to his consummate and unscrupulousness.

Place in History

Sher Shah was a most remarkable ruler of medieval India in

administrative ability, strength of character and actual achievements. He challenges comparison with the greatest medieval Indian despot, Ala-ud-din Khalji, who, in sheer ability, both as a conqueror and administrator, was undoubtedly superior, but in constructive statesmanship inferior to this Afghan monarch. Sher Shah's administrative work was more enduring and also more beneficial than that of Ala-ud-din. His institutions served the public good and have given their author a permanent place in the history of the country. It will be unjust to compare him with Akbar who was distinctly superior both as a ruler and as a man. The theory that "Sher Shah may justly dispute with Akbar the claim of being the first who attempted to build up an Indian nation by reconciling the followers of the rival creeds" seems to be rather a tall one. There is little evidence to show that he wanted to build up an Indian nation. In fact, he had no clear idea of what a nation was. The argument that "the experiment of abolition of *jizya* and cow-slaugter would have been extremely injudicious in an age which still breathed the atmosphere of Sultan Sikandar's reign" is also not sound. In an earlier century Zain-ul-Abdin (1420-1470) of Kashmir had successfully tried this experiment after the extremely intolerent reign of his father, another Sikandar, known as 'Idol Breaker', and deservedly won the title of 'Akbar of Kashmir' from the grateful posterity. The truth, therefore, is that Sher Shah never really dreamt of building up an Indian nation. It will not be doing justice to the memory of Akbar to suggest that because "the relations between the Hindus and the Indian Muhammadans were not less cordial at the accession of Akbar than at the time of his death" his policy was unwise or foolish. It is a matter of common knowledge with us that the relations between the two communities were less cordial during the best days of Indian nationalism with the apostle of truth, non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity at the head, than during the gloomy days of the stifling British supremacy in the country. For this strange phenomenon, however, no impartial student of history would blame Mahatma Gandhi. In both the cases the fault lay with the grasping and aggressive character and extra-territorial affiliations of the Muslim community which would hardly believe in mutual adjustment as long as it could be possible to retain its old supremacy or manage to establish a fresh one. Sher Shah was guided by the motive of enlightened self-interest rather than by 'his national

therefore, sought their co-operation in the civil and military administration.

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patriotism', as a modern writer* has wrongly asserted. It has yet to be proved that any Muslim ruler of India, with the exception of Akbar, was ever inspired by 'national patriotism' for this land. Moreover, India was not Sher Shah's "patria" and we know that like other Afghan monarchs he had invited his fellow Afghans from Afghanistan and distributed land in this country among them not only to strengthen his own position but also as a duty.

Sher Shah's indefatigable industry, devotion to duty, numerous reforms and love of justice have secured for him a place of distinction in Indian history. No medieval Indian monarch except Akbar the Great had so much positive contribution for the welfare of the people to his credit. Whether judged as a leader of men or as a builder of institutions or as an administrator or statesman he stands head and shoulder above his predecessors. Despite the eulogy of Afghan writers and some recent historians, his administration was not perfect and, therefore, not above criticism, yet it was designed to further the interests of the people as much as, if not more than, that of the monarch himself. The present writer is unable to agree with the late Sir Woolseley Haig's opinion that he was "the greatest of the Muslim rulers of India". But his place in our medieval Indian history is very high indeed. It is next to that of Akbar who, as Dr. Qanungo rightly observes, "is justly entitled to a higher place in history than Sher Shah."

ISLAM SHAH (1545-1553)

Early career

Islam Shah's original name was Jalal Khan and he was the younger son of Sher Shah. As he was a fairly well-educated man and a poet in Persian at the time of his accession, it may be presumed that he must have been given a fairly high education in his early years. But he was primarily a soldier and had given proof of his military ability on more than one occasion before he was called to the sovereignty of Hindustan. In 1531 his valiant defence of Chunargarh so impressed Humayun that on the conclusion of peace the latter insisted on Jalal Khan's taking charge of the Afghan contingent which Sher Shah had placed at the disposal of the Mughul emperor. In 1537 he played a prominent part in the siege of Gaur, and was subsequently entrusted with the defence of Teliagarhi, the

* S. R. Sharma, vide his *Crescent in India*.

gateway to Bangal, where the Afghans under him inflicted the first defeat upon the Mughul army. In 1539 and 1540 he was placed in charge of an important division of his father's army in the battles of Chausa and Kanauj, and in both the engagements he displayed great valour and military capacity. He co operated with his father in the campaigns against the rulers of Raisin and Jodhpur. While Sher Shah was engaged in the siege of Kalinjar, Jalal was deputed to reduce Rewa, but this work could not be accomplished due to Sher Shah's untimely death.

We have little evidence to form an estimate of Islam Shah's administrative achievements before his accession. Certain it is that he must have been employed by his father in settling the country and in helping him in the enforcement of his varied reforms. Islam Shah must have, therefore, acquired a considerable administrative experience before 1545.

Accession and struggle with Adil Khan

When Sher Shah was burnt to death at Kalinjar on 22nd May, 1545, his eldest son, Adil Khan, was at Ranthambhor and Jalal Khan at Rewa, 85 miles south-east of Kalinjar. Although the deceased monarch had nominated Adil as his heir-apparent, his nobles preferred Jalal Khan who was industrious and skilled in arms, while his elder brother was ease-loving and devoted to pleasures. Moreover, Jalal was nearer at hand, and it was then thought dangerous to keep the throne vacant for long. So the nobles, headed by Isa Khan Hajib, sent a messenger to Jalal Khan to come immediately to take his father's place as king. Jalal reached Kalinjar on May 27, 1545 and was crowned the same day. He assumed the title of Islam Shah.

He began his reign by putting the Chandel ruler of Kalinjar, Kirat Singh, and his seventy principal followers to death. In order to enlist the support of the army he paid it two months' salary in cash of which one month's was by way of reward. Next, he promoted all the 6,000 soldiers of his personal army which he had maintained as a prince—the ordinary soldiers being raised to the status of officers and officers to that of *amirs*. This unwise measure caused dissatisfaction among the old nobility. Some of the disaffected nobles turned secretly to Adil Khan. The king, feeling suspicious, wrote to his brother to come to Agra, to which town he himself had proceeded soon after his accession, and take charge of the kingdom which was his by right. As eminent nobles like Qutub Khan Naib, Isa Khan

Niyazi, Khawas Khan and Jalal Khan Julwani stood surety for his life, Adil Khan set out from Ranthambhor. But while at Agra, Islam Shah hatched an unsuccessful plot against his life. Adil, therefore, thought it better to accept the governorship of a small province, and retired to Bayana, which was assigned to him by the king. Inspite of the apparent reconciliation, the quarrel between the two brothers continued and Islam Shah sent an assassin to Bayana to take Adil's life. The four nobles, who had stood surety for Adil's life, considering it a breach of trust on the part of the king, secretly threw themselves on the side of his elder brother. Adil Khan revolted and, accompanied by Khawas Khan, proceeded to attack Agra ; but he was defeated in a battle outside the town and fled to Panna and was not heard of anymore. His supporters, Khawas Khan and Isa Khan, retreated to Mewat (Alwar). Islam Shah now sent an army in pursuit of the two rebellious nobles which was, however, defeated in an encounter at Firozpur in Mewat. The king, therefore, sent another force which compelled Khawas Khan and Isa Khan to flee to the Kamaun hills to take refuge with the local raja.

The suppression of old nobles

Islam Shah grew suspicious of most of the nobles. On his way to Chunar he put Jalal Khan Julwani and his brother, Khudadad Khan, to death. Qutub Khan, who too was a supporter of Adil, was seized with panic and fled to Lahore to take shelter with Haibat Khan Niyazi, the governor of that province. Haibat Khan delivered him to the king. Qutub Khan, with several other nobles, was sent as prisoner to the fort of Gwalior and there they were blown up by gun-powder. This struck terror into the hearts of the nobles.

(*i*) ***The Niyazi rebellion.*** The strict measures against those who were suspected of complicity in the rebellion of Adil Khan alarmed the old nobility and revived tribal jealousies which had been successfully kept under check by Sher Shah. The Niyazis became particularly disaffected. Said Khan Niyazi, becoming alarmed, fled to join his brother, Haibat Khan Niyazi, governor of Lahore, and persuaded the latter to lead the revolt against Islam Shah. Khawas Khan, too, joined the rebels. The situation became so menacing that Islam Shah proceeded in person to suppress the rebellion. The rebels met the king at Ambala (1547). Khawas Khan, who had joined the Niyazis, withdrew on the eve of the battle, as Haibat

Khan, who was fired with the ambition of becoming king, had declared that the "crown was the prize of the sword," while Khawas was still a supporter of Adil Khan. In the battle the Niyazis were defeated. Islam Shah pursued them as far as the Jhelam. Leaving a force, he returned to Agra. This army inflicted a defeat on the rebels at Dungot (Dhankot) on the Indus and compelled the Niyazis to take shelter with the Gakkhars. Haibat Khan, persisting in his ambition to retrieve his position, appeared in the region of the Indus ; but he was again defeated and his mother and daughters were taken prisoners. Islam Shah insulted and dishonoured them for two years and then put them to death. Those of the Niyazis who took refuge with the Gakkhars were exterminated, but only after two years' warfare. Haibat Khan was lucky to escape to Kashmir. He intervened in a dispute between Mirza Haider, the then ruler of Kashmir, and the Chakk tribe. The Chakks after their victory over Mirza Haidar, attacked Haibat Khan. The Niyazis fought bravely but were all slain.

Islam Shah had come into conflict with the Gakkhars who had given shelter to the Niyazis. The Gakkhar chief, Sultan Adam, was an ally of Humayun and there appeared to be disquieting prospect of the formation of a coalition between him, Humayun, Kamran and Mirza Haidar against Islam Shah. The latter took pains to prevent such a contingency and built a chain of fortresses for defence (on the eastern bank of the Chinab and 90 miles north-east of Sialkot) and named it Mankot. Although the Gakkhars could not be completely subdued, Islam Shah had the satisfaction of seeing that the Niyazis had met their doom and his enemies had failed to make a common cause against him. Freed from anxiety, he turned his attention towards other problems.

(*ii*) ***Rebellion of Shujaat Khan.*** Shujaat Khan, who was a top-ranking noble and also governor of Malwa since the time of Sher Shah, had grown disaffected owing to the new king's policy of suspicion and tyranny. Like all other ambitious men, he now wanted to assert his independence. But after the royal victory over the Niyazis at Ambala, he renewed his allegiance and waited on Islam Shah at Gwalior. While there, an attempt was made on his life by a man named Usman ; but he was only wounded. Suspecting the king's complicity in the plot, he departed for his province without leave. Islam Shah invaded Malwa but Shujaat Khan retreated without any battle. He fled to Banswara and finally took refuge in

Dungarpur. But as the Niyazi rebellion in the Panjab had not come to an end, Islam thought it expedient to pacify Shujaat. On the request of Daulat Khan Ujiala, son of Shujaat Khan and a boon companion of the king, he forgave him and restored him to a major portion of the province, except the district of Malwa proper which was given to some other official.

(*iii*) ***Death of Khawas Khan.*** Another great noble of Sher Shah's time was Khawas Khan who was, without doubt, the best soldier and staunchest supporter of the Sur dynasty. Reference has already been made to his taking up the cause of Adil Khan and refusing to make a common cause with Haibat Khan Niyazi at the battle of Ambala. After that event Khawas took refuge with the Raja of Kamaun, who was asked by Islam Shah to surrender the fugitive. But as his request was rejected, Islam Shah entered into communication with Khawas Khan himself. By promising to forgive his offences, he successfully persuaded him to come down to the court. Khawas complied ; but as he reached Sirsi, six miles from Sambhal, he was put to death in his tent at night by Taj Khan Karrani, governor of the last named place, at the instigation of the king (1546).

Last days and death

Islam Shah was not content with the suppression and death of his high nobles at court. He wanted to put down the powerful governors of provinces of his father's time as well. How he reduced Shujaat Khan to submission has already been related. He removed Qazi Fazilat from the governorship of Bangal and appointed Mahmud Khan Sur in his place. In other provinces, too, he appointed men of his own choice after removing the governors of his father's time. He brought East Bangal under his sway. In 1553 Humayun, who had got rid of his ungrateful brother, Kamran, made a feeble attempt to recover Hindustan and as a preliminary step set out to conquer Kashmir. Islam Shah was at this time lying ill at Delhi. When he heard that Humayun had crossed the Indus, he immediately took off leeches from his throat and, though ill, started to face the invader. Humayun was dismayed at the promptitude displayed by his old rival's son and returned to Kabul. There seemed to be now no danger to the Afghan kingdom and Islam Shah returned to his favourite residence at Gwalior. Here an attempt was made on his life by the disaffected nobility but the plot was

soon discovered and the conspirators put to death. This was the second attempt on his life, the first having been made early during his reign. During the later part of his reign Islam Shah passed his days in pleasure and enjoyment. Not long afterwards, however, he was afflicted by a painful disease caused by a tumour in his privy parts. Medical aid proved of no avail and he died on 30th October, 1553.

Administration

Islam Shah added East Bangal to the territory that he had inherited from his father. Besides, he succeeded in compelling Kashmir to accept his suzerainty. The Sur kingdom, therefore, extended at his death, in 1556, from the Indus on the north-west to the hills of Assam in the east, and from the Himalayas in the north to the Vindhyas in the South. The States of Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur and the provinces of Gujarat and Kathiawar were not included in the empire.

Islam Shah was a good administrator. He took drastic steps to crush the power of the nobles who had acquired the position of privilege and had almost over-shadowed the throne. His theory of kingship was different from that of his father. He did not believe in the Afghan practice of dividing the kingdom among his fellow Afghans. His ideal was nearer to the concept of the divine monarchy of the Mughuls than to the Afghan idea of the king as '*primus inter pares*', for he insisted on unquestionable obedience to his will on the part of his highest nobles. He issued an ordinance that no nobleman was to possess any male elephant. By another edict dancing girls were forcibly taken away from them. He forbade the use of red tents by them, which was the special prerogative of the king. These measures greatly reduced the prestige and pretensions of the nobility. He issued a code of regulations covering eighty sheets of paper which were circulated in every district and *pargana*. He passed many administrative laws and issued detailed instructions for the guidance of his officials. His legislation touched every department and almost every sphere of State activity. He was anxious to see that his officials and people knew their rights as well as their duties. This is borne out by Badayuni's statement that "all the points of instructions were written in documents whether agreeable to Law (*Shariat*) or not, so that there was no necessity to refer any such matter to the *Qazi* or *Mufti*, nor was it proper to do so." He allowed the administrative

policy of his father to stand, and improved it in some details. In every district throughout his dominion a *darbar* was held on Fridays. Chiefs and officers of the district used to assemble under a canopy to pay obeisance to the shoes and a quiver of Islam Shah which were placed in front of a raised platform resembling the throne. Islam Shah's ordinances were read aloud by the secretary. Nobody was allowed to offend against the majesty of the law. The historian Badayuni, when a boy, was an eye-witness of one of these *darbars* at Bajwara near Bayana, and he records the fact that such *darbars* were held throughout Islam Shah's reign. (*Badayuni*, Vol. I, pp. 384-385).

While allowing his father's military reforms to continue, he introduced greater order and organisation in the army by establishing a graded system which became the basis of Akbar's *mansabdari* system. The lowest unit consisted of 50 troops, the next higher 200, the third 250 and the fourth consisted of 500 troops. There were larger divisions also, such as those of 5,000, 10,000 and 20,000 men. (*Badayuni*, Vol. I, p. 385).

Sher Shah had built *sarais* at a distance of every four miles along his roads. Islam Shah added one *sarai* between every two *sarais* of his father. In these cooked and uncooked food was kept for Muslim and Hindu employees of the postal department and probably also for the travellers. The building of a *sarai* at every *kos* was an unnecessary waste of tax-payers' money. The foolish practice of distributing charity at these *sarais*, too, seems to have been prompted, as Woolseley Haig writes, by his vanity or jealousy of his father's reputation.

Character

Islam Shah was a capable soldier, but very cruel and treacherous to his subordinates. Although his policy of abasement of the nobility was unexceptionable, yet it was pursued in a tactless manner. There is no doubt that it caused needless disaffection among the Afghan peers and aroused their latent jealousy, tribal factiousness and turbulence. His suspicion, cruelty, vindictiveness and narrow-mindedness provoked rebellions which lasted practically throughout his reign. It was, however, fortunate that he possessed the requisite qualities of a successful general which enabled him to suppress his nobility and impose his will upon it.

He was, however, something more than a successful soldier. He was an administrator of marked ability. It has been mentioned that

he promulgated administrative laws regardless of the fact whether they came in conflict with the religious prejudices of the age. He may, therefore, be said to be a legislator among the Sultans of Delhi. Laws were made known to the people through the local *darbars* held on Fridays and were rigorously enforced. An anecdote is related that one day one of his *amirs* named Shah Muhammad Farmuli in a humorous vein said to Islam Shah, "Your Majesty ! Last night I saw in a dream three bags descend from heaven ; in one of which was dust, and in another gold, and in the third paper. The dust fell upon the head of the soldiers, the gold went to the house of the Hindu *daftaris* (clerks) and the paper remained in the royal treasury." (*Badayuni*, Vol. I, p. 387). Islam Shah understood the hint and promised that after his return to Gwalior, he would look into the soldiers' account and pay them in gold. The story is suggestive and shows that the lot of the soldier was hard, as it was bound to be under the rule of a strong king. It also shows the Afghan envy of the prosperity of Hindu clerks, and that Islam Shah's government was conducted on high bureaucratic principles requiring a vast volume of correspondence.

Islam Shah was a cultured prince. He was well-educated and composed verses in Persian. He took delight in the company of learned men. He loved architecture and erected a few beautiful buildings. Sometimes he took part in theological discussions. Though orthodox in his private life, he was not a religious bigot.

According to Professor N. B. Roy, kingship under him lost its feudal character and became essentially modern. It must, however, be stated that despite his enthusiasm and administrative ability, he was at times cruel and vindictive and aroused the tribal and clannish prejudices of his Afghan peers and, therefore, paved the way for the downfall of his dynasty.

SUCCESSORS OF ISLAM SHAH : CONDITION OF INDIA IN 1553-1555

Firoz Shah, 1553

Islam Shah was succeeded by his son, Firoz, a boy of 12 years. Three days after his accession he was put to death by his maternal uncle, Mubariz Khan, son of Nizam Khan, who was a younger brother of Sher Shah. Islam Shah was aware of Mubariz's ambition and wanted to put him out of his son's way ; but he had been pre-

vented from doing so by his wife, Bibi Bai. Mubariz Khan seized the throne, and assumed the title of Muhammad Adil Shah. He was popularly known as Adil.

Muhammad Adil Shah, 1553-1557

The new king sought to conciliate the nobility by a lavish distribution of wealth. He appointed Shamsher Khan, brother of Khawas Khan, his *wazir*. But he reposed confidence particularly in Hemu, who had started his life as a hawker of salt in the streets of Rewari and had subsequently been employed in a confidential capacity by Islam Shah. Muhammad Adil Shah was a worthless ruler. He was grossly ignorant and incompetent, and was fond of the company of low people. He was so much addicted to debauchery that he could find little time for attending to business. His indifference gave the ambitious nobles an opportunity to rebel. The first to rebel was Taj Khan Karrani, the murderer of Khawas Khan. The rebel, though defeated at Chhibramau in the modern Hardoi district, was allowed to escape and create a great commotion in Bihar. The next to rebel was Ibrahim Khan Sur, who was son of Ghazi Khan Sur and a brother-in-law of the king. But the king's sister, getting scent of her brother's (Adil's) evil design, helped her husband to escape from the fort of Chunar. He fled to Bayana and defeated a royal army sent against him. Flushed with victory, Ibrahim marched on Delhi and captured it. There he assumed the title of king. Adil made a feeble attempt to recover Delhi, but failed. Ibrahim occupied Agra also.

The third nobleman to revolt was Ahmad Khan Sur, governor of Lahore and another brother-in-law (husband of Adil's sister) of the king. He assumed the title of Sikandar Shah. The fourth important rebel was Muhammad Khan Sur, governor of Bangal, who took up the title of Shams-ud-din Muhammad Shah Ghazi. Northern India was, thus, split up into four kingdoms: namely the Panjab under Sikandar Shah ; Delhi and Agra under Ibrahim Shah ; the country from Agra to Bihar under Adil Shah, and Bangal under Muhammad Shah. Each of these four rulers was anxious to establish his supremacy over the others. Owing to a perpetual struggle among them there was great disorder in the country, and small chieftains, such as Ghazi Khan Sur of Bayana, Haji Khan of Alwar and Yahya Turan of Sambhal, became desirous of carving out kindgoms for themselves.

Sikandar Shah of Lahore, fired with the ambition of seizing

Delhi, marched against Ibrahim who brought 80,000 men into the field. A battle was fought at Farah, 20 miles north of Agra, in which Ibrahim was defeated (1555). He fled to Etawah and Sikandar obtained possession of Delhi and Agra.

Taking advantage of the discord among the Afghans, Humayun, who had consolidated his position in Kabul, started in November 1554, on a campaign for the reconquest of Hindustan. Tatar Khan Kashi, who held the fort of Rohtasgarh on the Jhelam on behalf of Sikandar, evacuated it as soon as Humayun crossed the Indus. Humayun captured Lahore without opposition on 24th February, 1555. While the Mughals were invading the Panjab, Sikandar and Ibrahim were fighting each other near Agra. That was why they could offer no effective resistance to the invader. When the Mughuls pushed on towards Delhi after the occupation of the Panjab, Sikandar was roused to a sense of his danger and sent a force to oppose the enemy at Dipalpur, which was defeated. Another Afghan army suffered a defeat at Machhiwara. Sikandar had, therefore, to proceed in person; but he, too, suffered a defeat at Sarhind on 22nd June, 1555, and fled to the hills of the Panjab and the Mughuls took possession of Delhi.

Regardless of the epoch-making events that were taking place in north-western Hindustan, Ibrahim, whose recent defeat had not cooled his ambition, renewed his struggle with Adil Shah. Adil sent Hemu who defeated him near Kalpi and drove him back to Bayana. Ibrahim, however, again met Hemu near Khanua, but was again defeated. Hemu now besieged him in the fortress of Bayana till he was recalled by his master, Adil, who was being threatened by Muhammad Shah of Bengal. The king of Bengal had reduced the country as far as Jaunpur and was proceeding rapidly towards Kalpi in order to occupy Delhi and set himself up as the ruler of Hindustan. Hemu joined Adil Shah at Kalpi and defeated Muhammad Shah of Bengal at Chhapparghatta, 20 miles from Kalpi, by a surprise attack. Muhammad Shah fled. Adil captured Bangal and appointed Shahbaz Khan its governor. He then returned to Chunar and made it his residence.

The condition of northern India at this time was miserable. Owing to constant warfare, military adventurers had risen in different parts of the country. Their violence and capacity had so much oppressed the peasantry that cultivation had almost disappeared. A famine broke out; it was particularly severe in the vicinity of Delhi

and Agra. Nature also seemed to frown on the warring humanity. There was little rainfall that year. Grain, therefore, became scarce. *Jowar* was sold one seer a rupee and, sometime after, it was not available at all. People were compelled to live on wild herbs and roots. A pestilence broke out and caused havoc among the people. The country was depopulated. Unfortunately, there was an explosion in the old fort of Agra which shook the city to its foundations and killed a large number of people. Such was the condition of India at the time when Humayun recovered his father's throne at Delhi.

21

AKBAR THE GREAT (1542-1605)

Birth and boyhood

Akbar was born at the house of Rana Virsal of Amarkot (in the Thar and Parkar district of Sindh) on October 15,* 1542. His parents, Humayun and Hamida Banu Begam, fleeing back from the vicinity of Jodhpur, had taken shelter with the Rajput chief of the place, who generously assisted Humayun with men and material to enable him to lead an expedition against Thatta and Bhakkar. Humayun started on the expedition in the second week of October 1542. On the way, Tardi Beg Khan brought him the joyful news of the birth of his son. Humayun, who was then in a destitute condition and could not reward his followers in a befitting manner, called for a china plate and broke on it a pod of musk and, distributing it among his men, said : "This is all the present I can afford to make you on the birth of my son, whose fame will, I trust, be one day expanded all over the world, as the perfume of the musk now fills this tent."

Akbar's childhood was spent in adversity. His father could make little progress in the expedition against Thatta and Bhakkar. Humayun's men foolishly picked a quarrel with his generous host, Rana Virsal. Owing to the coolness between them, Hamida Banu Begam and Akbar had to be brought on the eighth of December to the town of Jun, 75 miles from Amarkot, where Humayun was then encamped. After more than six months' fruitless endeavour to conquer Sindh, Humayun resolved to proceed to Persia to implore help from the king (Shah Tahmasp) of that country. As the party reached Mustan (Mustang), south of Quetta, news came that Askari was coming to attack them. Humayun, not being in a position to offer resistance, seated Hamida Banu Begam on his own horse and fled in the direction of Kandhar, leaving Akbar, then a baby of one year, behind. Askari picked up the child and took him to Kandhar where he was

* V. A. Smith gives November 23, which is wrong. See my Paper on 'The Date of Akbar's Birth' in Agra College Journal of History and Political Science, Vol. II (1955) for authorities and the reasons for rejecting Smith's conclusions.

well looked after by his wife. After an adventurous journey Humayun reached Persia, and, securing help from the Shah, attacked Kandhar and captured it from his brother, Askari, in September 1545. On November 15, he captured Kabul from Kamran and sent for his son, Akbar, who had been brought from Kandhar to Kabul during the winter of 1544-45. Akbar was then about three years old and, according to Abul Fazl, he recognised his mother at once and jumped into her lap. His first public appearance was made on the occasion of his circumcision in March 1545. Smith's view that he was now named Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar in preference to Badr-ud-din, which name had been given to him at the time of his birth, is erroneous.

As was usual with princes, Akbar had numerous nurses ; some of them actually suckled him, while others only looked after him. The most important among his nurses was Jiji Anaga whose husband, Shams-ud-din who had saved Humayun from drowning after the battle of Kanauj in 1540, was subsequently given the title of Atga (Atkah) Khan. Maham Anaga was his head nurse and her son was the notorious Adham Khan.

Humayun had suffered considerably owing to the inimical conduct of his brothers and had lost and recovered Kabul more than once. In one of the expeditions Kamran had suspended Akbar at the rampart of the city and exposed him to the fire of Humayun's guns. During his father's vicissitudes the child had to lead an unsettled life.

In November 1547, when Akbar was about five years of age, arrangements were made for his education. One after another tutors were appointed, but they failed to teach their pupil reading and writing. He was a truant boy, more fond of sports and animals such as camels, horses, dogs and pigeons, than of studies. From his very boyhood, he possessed a marvellous memory, but would not sit down to learn the alphabet. He, however, became an expert in riding, swordsmanship and other martial exercises. Humayun, who was a scholar of no mean repute, chid Akbar and advised him to spend his time in study. But the parental admonitions proved to be of no avail.

On the death of Hindal, in November 1551, the assignment of Ghazni was conferred upon Akbar and he was betrothed to the daughter of the deceased, Ruqaiya Begam. Akbar took charge of Ghazni and remained, nominally, its governor till November 1554, when Humayun embarked on an expedition for the reconquest of Hindustan.

A little after Humayun had set out for the reconquest of India, he appointed Munim Khan as Akbar's guardian. On the defeat of Sikandar Sur, a nephew of Sher Shah and one of the claimants of the throne of Delhi, at Sarhind on January 22, 1555, Akbar was credited with the victory in the official records and was formally declared to be the heir-apparent. Within a few months of the re-occupation of Delhi by his father, he was appointed governor of Lahore and the famous Turkoman commander, Bairam Khan, became his guardian in place of Munim Khan. Akbar was then thirteen years of age.

Accession : February 14, 1556

Humayun died as the result of the fall from the staircase of his library located at *Sher Mandal* in Delhi on 27th January, 1556. His death was concealed and a man was dressed up to impersonate him in order to enable Akbar to crown himself without opposition. The news of his father's death reached Akbar at Kalanaur, fifteen miles west of Gurdaspur, in the Panjab, where he was engaged in operations against Sikandar Sur, who had taken refuge in the fort of Mankot. His guardian Bairam Khan took immediate steps to enthrone him on a brick platform improvised for the occasion and proclaimed him Emperor on February 14, 1556. His accession to the throne had already been proclaimed at Delhi on 11th February, 1556, the very day when Humayun's death was made public.

Condition of India in 1556

At the time of his accession in 1556 Akbar was only nominally ruler of a small part of the Panjab. Soon after his father's death, Delhi and Agra had been occupied by Hemu and even in the Panjab Akbar's claim was disputed by Sikandar Sur. The territory of Kabul was practically independent under his half-brother, Mirza Hakim. Muhammad Adil Shah and Ibrahim Sur were also disputing Akbar's claim to the sovereignty of Hindustan. The remaining provinces were completely independent under their local rulers. The economic condition of the country was even worse. A widespread famine was raging with full fury and devastating the fertile land. The country had also suffered owing to two years' destructive warfare indulged in by the successors of Islam Shah. The famine was particularly severe in the districts of Delhi and Agra where thousands of men died of starvation. "The capital was devastated and nothing remained but a few houses. An epidemic plague ensued and spread

through most of the cities of Hindustan. Multitudes died and men were driven to feed on human flesh, parties being formed to seize and eat solitary victims."

Akbar's precarious position

Besides the presence of the three Sur rivals, Akbar's greatest enemy was Hemu, the Hindu prime minister of Muhammad Adil Shah, who was bent upon expelling the Mughuls from India. Akbar had also to deal with the disaffection of some of his own nobles, prominent among whom was Abul Mali. This half-crazy man had been spoiled by the attention shown to him by Humayun. He refused to attend the "Coronation Darbar" held on 17th February, and behaved with such impropriety that he had to be imprisoned by Bairam Khan in the fort of Lahore. The loyalty of the army, too, was not above suspicion owing to the precarious position of the new monarch.

Though only a little over thirteen years, Akbar was a precocious boy of extraordinary acumen and ability. He resolved to face the situation with courage, and his guardian, Bairam Khan, supported him with unflinching loyalty.

Success of Akbar's principal rival, Hemu

Adil Shah, who had made Chunar his capital, despatched Hemu to drive the Mughuls out of India. A resident of Rewari, Hemu was a Dhusar Bhargava,* and in his early days used to sell salt in the streets of his town. His first employment in the State service was as a weighman in the market. But, as he possessed remarkable intelligence and tact, he was promoted by Islam Shah who employed him in a confidential capacity at his court. When Adil Shah became king, he promoted Hemu to a position of importance. He thus got an opportunity of making use of his uncommon military and administrative ability. Though a man of humble origin and of puny physique, he possessed a soldier's courage and patience, and was an able general. As he proved his worth and loyalty, he was promoted to the post of prime minister, and thus earned the distinction of being the first of the only two Hindus, the other being Todar Mal, who occupied the position of the chief minister of any Muhammadan ruler of Delhi during the medieval period of our country's history. He commanded a large army

* In contemporary chronicles he is called Baqqal or Vaish, but he was, in fact, a Bhargava (Brahman of Gaur sub-caste).

composed of Afghans and Turks, besides Hindus, and won their loyalty and admiration. He won twenty-two out of the twenty-four battles he fought for his master. He defeated Adil's rival, Ibrahim Sur, more than once, and also Muhammad Shah of Bangal. He was preparing to proceed to attack Agra when Humayun's death occurred. Taking advantage of the incident, he advanced from Gwalior to Agra. Iskandar Khan Uzbeg, governor of the place, took fright and retired towards Delhi without fighting, losing about 3,000 of his men during his retreat. Hemu occupied Agra with its treasure and equipment and proceeded towards Delhi. Tardi Beg Khan, governor of the capital, offered a feeble resistance at Tughlaqabad, 5 miles east of the Qutub Minar, on 7th October, 1556, but was defeated. He fled along with Iskandar Khan towards Sarhind. Ali Quli Khan Shaibani, governor of Sambhal, also abandoned his charge and joined the fugitives.

The entire country from Gwalior to the river Satlaj passed under the control of Hemu. He took the bold step of setting himself up as an independent ruler and carrying out his formal enthronement in the fort of Delhi under the title of Maharaja *Vikramaditya*. He thus became the first and the only Hindu to occupy the throne of Delhi during the medieval period of our history. Modern European writers have joined the medieval chroniclers (whose prejudice to a Hindu, who made any attempt to free his country from foreign yoke, is obvious) in finding fault with him. No impartial student of history, however, can fail to admire Hemu's qualities of leadership and the promptitude with which he seized the opportunity of banishing alien rule from the capital, though, unluckily, his success proved to be short-lived. If foreigners like Humayun and the descendants of Sher Shah could advance claims to the sovereignty of India, Hemu, who was a real native of the soil, had an equally legitimate, if not better, claim to rule over his ancestral land. Had he succeeded in driving the Mughuls out of India, historians would have formed a different opinion about him. The fact that Akbar eventually proved to be a 'national ruler' need not be taken as an argument for the erroneous view that his claims to the throne of Delhi in 1556 were superior to those of Hemu. The charge of treachery against Adil, who had strangled his nephew to death and occupied his throne, is groundless. Hemu only repudiated his authority, though rebellion and even use of force is legitimate against foreign rule. No praise can be too great for Hemu's bold endeavour

to re-establish indigenous rule at Delhi after more than 350 years of foreign domination.

Battle of Panipat, November 5, 1556

The news of the fall of Delhi and Agra alarmed the Mughuls, and they advised their sovereign, then encamped at Jalandar, to retire immediately to Kabul, as their number was not more than 20,000, while Hemu's army was reputed to be 1,00,000 strong and was flushed with its recent successes. But Bairam Khan decided in favour of recovering Delhi and Akbar heartily agreed with his guardian. Leaving Khizr Khwaja Khan at Lahore to deal with Sikandar Sur, Akbar left Jalandar, on October 13, on his expedition against Hemu. At Sarhind, the three fugitive governors of Agra, Delhi and Sambhal joined Akbar, and counselled him to retreat to Kabul. Bairam Khan, however, took prompt steps to silence them by putting Tardi Beg Khan to death with Akbar's permission. Though condemned by some contemporary historians, who accused him of personal jealousy towards the deceased, the act was necessary to restore confidence in the army and to stamp out sedition. The result was wholesome. The army continued its uneventful march towards Delhi.

Hemu, who had consolidated his position and won over his Afghan officers and soldiers by a liberal distribution of wealth that he had acquired at Delhi and Agra, made preparations to check the advance of the Mughuls. He sent forward his advance-guard with a park of his artillery to encounter that of Akbar's which was proceeding rapidly under the command of Ali Quli Khan Shaibani. Ali Quli Khan was lucky enough to inflict by a successful ruse a defeat on Hemu's advance-guard and capture his artillery. Within a week or so the two main armies met on the historic field of Panipat on November 5, 1556. Bairam Khan commanded the ten thousand strong Mughul army from a long distance in the rear and placed Ali Quli Khan (later created Khan Zaman) in charge of the centre, Sikandar Khan Uzbeg in charge of the right wing and Abdulla Khan Uzbeg in charge of the left wing, while young Akbar was kept at a safe distance behind the army. Hemu's fighting strength consisted of 30,000 Rajput and Afghan cavalry and 500 war elephants who were protected by plate armour and had musketeers and cross-bowmen mounted on their backs. He had, however, no guns. He took his position in the centre and gave charge of his right wing to Shadi Khan Kakkar and left wing to Ramyya, his own sister's son. Inspite

of the loss of his artillery in a preliminary engagement, Hemu boldly charged the Mughuls and overthrew their right and left wings. He then launched an attack on their centre and hurled his 500 elephants against it. The Mughuls fought valiantly, but were about to give way and Hemu seemed to be on the point of winning. The Mughul centre, however, could not be broken, for by this time most of the troopers of their defeated wings had collected themselves and moving to Hemu's flanks had launched an attack on them. Moreover, there was a deep ravine in front of it, which barred Hemu's advance. Taking advantage of it Ali Quli Khan with a part of his cavalry, made a detour and attacked Hemu's centre from behind. Hemu made brave counter-charge and fighting continued fiercely. At this time a stray arrow struck Hemu in the eye and made him unconscious. His army, presuming that its leader was dead, was seized with panic and fled in all directions. Hemu's elephant driver tried to take his unconscious master beyond the reach of danger, but was overtaken by a Mughul officer named Shah Quli Mahram, who conducted him to Akbar. Bairam Khan asked his royal ward to earn the title of *ghazi* by slaying the infidel Hemu, with his own hands. We are told by a contemporary writer, Arif Qandhari, that he complied with the request and severed Hemu's head from his body. Abul Fazl's statement that he refused to kill a dying man is obviously wrong.

The second battle of Panipat produced momentous results. The Mughul victory was decisive. With the fall of Hemu his upstart military power collapsed instantly, and his wife and father fled from Delhi into Mewat. The political results of the battle were even more far-reaching. The Afghan pretensions to the sovereignty of Hindustan were gone for ever. The victors occupied Delhi on the 6th November though some part of the immense treasure was carried away by Hemu's widow. Agra, too, was occupied without delay. An unsuccessful attempt was made to apprehend Hemu's widow. His aged father was captured and put to death on his refusal to embrace Islam. Immediate steps were taken to complete the operations against Sikandar Sur, who was compelled to surrender in May 1557. He was granted an assignment in Bihar, from where he was, a little after, expelled by Akbar. He died a fugitive in Bangal (1558-1559). Muhammad Adil, the next Sur claimant to the throne of Delhi, was killed in 1557, at Munghir in a battle against the governor of

Bangal. Ibrahim, the third Sur pretender, had to find asylum in Orissa. Thus within two years of his victory at Panipat there remained no Sur rival to contest Akbar's claim to the sovereignty of Hindustan.

Regency of Bairam Khan, 1556-1560

The outstanding achievements of Bairam Khan as a regent were the defeat of Hemu and the elimination of Akbar's Sur rivals. The next problem awaiting solution was the setting up of a provisional administration in the territory that had passed into possession after the battle of Panipat. A rough and ready type of government for the maintenance of order and realisation of revenue was established. While operations were still continuing against Sikandar Sur, Akbar's mother and other ladies of the family arrived from Kabul and rejoined him at Mankot. At Jalandar Akbar publicly gave evidence of his regard for his guardian by permitting Bairam Khan to marry his cousin, Salima Begam (daughter of Humayun's sister, Gulrukh). On his return to Agra in October 1558, Bairam Khan made arrangements for Akbar's education, and appointed Mir Abdul Latif his tutor. He was a distinguished scholar and so liberal in his religious views that in Persia, his native country, he was considered a *Sunni*, while in India he was looked upon as a *Shia*. But even this 'paragon of greatness' failed to persuade his royal pupil to study. Akbar continued to spend his time in hunting, elephant fights and similar other pursuits. The work of administration remained in the hands of Bairam Khan, who discharged his duties satisfactorily.

Besides consolidating the newly occupied territory, Bairam sent expeditions to Gwalior and Jaunpur. Raja Ram Shah, who was attempting to recover his ancestral capital, was driven away and the fortress of Gwalior was occupied in 1557. Ali Quli Khan, now entitled *Khan Zaman*, re-occupied Sambhal and seized the country between that town and Lucknow. Ajmer in Rajasthan was also conquered. But expeditions to Ranthambhor and Chunar did not prove successful. Another expedition planned to conquer Malwa had to be recalled owing to strained relations between Bairam Khan and Akbar.

Fall of Bairam Khan, 1560

The regency of Bairam Khan, which had been responsible for the firm re-establishment of the Mughal rule in Hindustan, lasted for four years. Early in 1560 the guardian was dismissed from office

and directed by Akbar to proceed on a pilgrimage to Mecca, which was then considered as an exile from the country. The events leading to the downfall of such an indomitable personality as Bairam Khan naturally aroused great interest among contemporary writers who have left a detailed account of the episode. Though a very loyal and successful administrator and guardian, Bairam Khan had never really been popular with the members of the Mughal court. In the first place, he was a *Shia* whereas the king, his household and the nobility were *Sunnis*. Secondly, though devoted to the interest of the State, "his disposition was arbitrary, haughty and jealous and he could not easily tolerate the presence of possible rivals near his young master." Thirdly, as Akbar began to attain maturity and take interest in the State affairs, Bairam Khan's influence naturally began to decline, and the Protector grew a little impatient and betrayed lack of discretion in dealing with the situation. His enemies seized every opportunity to exaggerate his faults and to misrepresent his intentions. Fourthly, Akbar, who was growing to manhood and resenting the galling tutelage, was desirous of asserting his authority. He had no privy purse and his household was not as well-provided as the family and dependants of Bairam Khan. Fifthly, the young emperor's immediate attachee, such as his foster-mother Maham Anaga, her son Adham Khan and son-in-law Shihab-ud-din, who had ambitions of sharing the general prosperity of their patron's growing empire and wielding power, looked upon Bairam Khan as an obstacle in their way and poisoned the ears of Akbar and of his mother against him. For these reasons a coolness grew up between the Protector and his royal ward, which soon deepened into a breach. Bairam Khan's execution of Tardi Beg had given offence to several members of the court, which, being orthodox *Sunni*, felt its religious susceptibilities injured by the appointment of Shaikh Gadai, a *Shia*, to the important post of *Sadr-i-Sadur*. It so happened one day that, while Akbar was enjoying an elephant fight, one of the beasts ran through the ropes of the tents of Bairam Khan who took offence and punished the *mahaut*, although the emperor had assured him that no indignity was intended. On another day a royal elephant attacked Bairam Khan's barge, while he was boating in the Yamuna. Akbar sent the *mahaut* concerned a captive to the Protector who inflicted a severe punishment on him. Bairam Khan dismissed Mulla Pir Muhammad, Akbar's tutor, once Bairam Khan's protege, which, too, gave offence to Akbar. Several other trivial incidents

of this type occurred and widened the breach between Bairam Khan and his master, who was persuaded by the dominant party in the *harem* to dismiss the regent. A plot was now formed against him. One day, early in 1560, while Bairam Khan was at Agra and the emperor was out a-hunting in the vicinity of that town, he received news of his mother's illness. Sending word to Bairam Khan, he proceeded to Delhi to visit his mother. Maham Anaga and other ladies gathered around him in the palace and complained bitterly against Bairam Khan whom they accused of harbouring evil designs of treason. The party won over the governors of Delhi, Lahore and Kabul to their cause, and took steps to strengthen the fortifications of the capital. When the conspirators saw that the young emperor was impressed, Maham Anaga, the head of the *harem* party, playing her trump card, begged leave to proceed to Mecca, as she pretended to be afraid of Bairam Khan's resentment. The trick prevailed and Akbar decided to dismiss Bairam Khan, and sent him a written message through his tutor, Abdul Latif, in these words : "As I was fully assured of your honesty and fidelity, I left all important affairs of State in your charge, and thought only of my own pleasures. I have determined to take the reins of government into my own hands, and it is desirable that you should now make the pilgrimage to Mecca upon which you have been so long intent. A suitable assignment out of the *parganas* of Hindustan will be made for your maintenance, the revenue of which will be transmitted to you by your agents."

Inspite of his friends' advice to the contrary, Bairam Khan did not like to stain the glorious record of his lifelong loyal service to the Mughul ruling family and, after some hesitation, complied with the royal command and surrendered the insignia of his office to Akbar. But, as Bairam Khan proceeded in a leisurely manner towards the Panjab to recover his private treasure, which he had left at Sarhind and Lahore, the court party sent Mulla Pir Muhammad, a former ungrateful protege of the regent, with a large army to hasten him out of the kingdom. This enraged the ex-regent, who, after leaving his family in the fort of Bhatinda, turned towards Jalandar and decided to offer armed resistance, though in a half-hearted manner. He was, however, defeated at Tilwara on the Bias and was brought before Akbar by Munim Khan, who had just been given the Protector's title of *Khan Khana*. Akbar forgave his former guardian and offered him three alternatives : first, to

receive the districts of Kalpi and Chanderi as governor ; second, to accept the post of his confidential adviser at court ; and third, to depart for Mecca. Bairam Khan, who was too high-minded to accept any inferior position than that he had so far held, decided to leave for Mecca. He marched, by way of Rajputana, for Patan (Anhilwara) where he was attacked by a band of Afghans and stabbed to death by one Mubarak Khan whose father had been killed at the battle of Machhiwara in 1555. His family was brought to Ahmadabad in a destitute condition. Akbar had them escorted to the court and received them honourably. He married Bairam's widow, Salima Begam, and brought up his infant son Abdur Rahim under his protection. The child rose to the highest rank and was honoured in 1584 by his father's title of *Khan Khana*. Like all masterful persons, Bairam Khan had considered himself indispensable : his fall was, sooner or later, inevitable. The court party, which was anxious to seize power and to do away with the Protector, must be held responsible for the indecent manner in which the latter's fall was brought about. Akbar, however, deserves credit for generously forgiving his actions and appreciating the services of one who was mainly responsible for the restoration of the Mughuls.

Early reforms : Enslaving of war prisoners abolished, 1562

Soon after entering his twentieth year Akbar showed evidence of a broadmindedness which his predecessors had lacked and which was to make him famous as the greatest Muslim ruler of India. Early in 1562 he issued orders strictly forbidding the practice of enslaving the prisoners of war. It was invariably the rule during the medieval times to make slaves of the prisoners of war and to convert them forcibly to Islam. The edict not only put an end to an inhuman practice, but also saved Hinduism from mass conversion of its adherents to an alien faith.

Death of Adham Khan and Akbar's freedom from harem party, May 16, 1562

Desirous of freeing himself from the control of his chief nurse, Maham Anaga, Akbar had appointed his foster-father Shams-ud-din Atga Khan his chief minister, in November 1561, in place of Munim Khan. The appointment was highly displeasing to Maham Anaga, Adham Khan, Munim Khan, Shihab-ud-din Ahmad Khan and certain other influential members of the *harem* party. Anxious to retain his position of predominance, Adham Khan entered the

palace with a few of his followers on May 16, 1562, and stabbed to death Atga Khan, who was engaged in his official duties. Next, he attempted to enter the royal apartments where Akbar was sleeping at the time, to make his peace with his sovereign ; but he was prevented by an eunuch who bolted the door. The noise awoke Akbar who came out of the *harem* by another door and angrily asked Adham Khan as to why he had killed the minister. Adham Khan not only put forth lame excuses, but had the audacity of seizing Akbar's hands and even his sword, as the king attempted to disarm the villain. Getting wild with rage, Akbar gave a blow with his fist into Adham's face, which stunned him. At his orders Adham was bound hand and foot and twice thrown down the palace terrace. He died instantaneously. Adham's accomplices Munim Khan, Shihab-ud-din and others absconded to escape just punishment. Akbar then informed Maham Anaga, who was lying ill, what had happened. She replied : "Your majesty has done well," and died forty days after her son's death. Akbar thus got rid of the baneful influence of the *harem* party. He erected a fine mausoleum on Adham's grave at Delhi and not only forgave Munim Khan, but also reinstated him as his chief minister.

Abolition of Pilgrims' Tax, 1563

When Akbar reached his twentieth year he experienced in himself a remarkable spiritual change which produced a wholesome result on his attitude towards his people. "On the completion of my twentieth year," said Akbar, "I experienced an internal bitterness and from the lack of spiritual provision for my last journey my soul was seized with exceeding sorrow." By this time the young king had decided to be his own master and to map out his own policy for the benefit of his dynasty and country, without being trammelled by any other consideration. The abolition of the practice of enslaving the prisoners of war was only the first indication of the broad policy that was gradually evolving in the young emperor's mind. The next concrete evidence of that policy came to light in 1563, when orders were issued for the abolition of the pilgrims' tax throughout his kingdom. That year, while encamped at Mathura, it was brought to his notice that his government levied a tax on the pilgrims who visited Hindu places of pilgrimage. He felt that it was contrary to the will of God that anybody should be asked to pay a tax for worshipping Him, although his form of worship might be 'erroneous'.

Abolition of *Jizya*, 1564

Early next year (1563) Akbar abolished throughout his dominions the most hated tax, called *Jizya*, which all non-Muslims were required to pay. This tax had imposed a great disability on the Hindus and constantly reminded them that they were treated as an inferior people. Akbar, who had decided to remove all invidious distinctions between various sections of his subjects, caused a substantial loss to his treasury by this reform. But he won the goodwill of a vast majority of the inhabitants of the country.

Death of Khwaja Muazzam, 1564

In March, 1564 Akbar inflicted a condign punishment on his maternal uncle Khwaja Muazzam and completely freed himself from the influence of all his relatives, male or female. Muazzam was a half-crazy man and had committed a number of murders and other grave offences. He wanted to kill his wife also. On getting this information, Akbar rode to the Khwaja's country-house near Agra. Although he was late in saving the life of the lady, whom the Khwaja had already killed, he ordered the villain to be ducked into the Yamuna along with his servants ; but, as he was not drowned, he was sent a prisoner to Gwalior where he died sometime after. After this incident no member of his court ever dared to influence his policy by unfair means. As Smith writes, Akbar "continued to show all proper respect to his mother, but he did not allow her to control his policy, which was conceived on principles distasteful to her."

Beginning of Imperial policy ; Akbar's conquests and annexations

During the period of two years (1560-1562) following the dismissal of Bairam Khan when Akbar was not yet entirely his own master and Maham Anaga was acting as the *de facto* prime minister, the young emperor did not take enough interest in the administration, and allowed the *harem* party to manage the affairs of the State. Yet at this very time he formed an ambitious design of conquering northern India and making himself the real emperor of the land. The seeds of the imperial policy that characterised the later years of his reign were sown during this period. According to Abul Fazl, Akbar's policy of conquests was prompted by this desire to give peace and prosperity to the people who were suffering under the selfish and unbridled despotism of local potentates. This is hardly true so far as Akbar's early conquests were concerned. In the early

years of his reign he was actuated by love of territory, power and wealth, and his decision to reduce and annex the neighbouring kingdoms was for the extension of his dominion. He did not make a secret of it. He used to say, "A monarch should be ever intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him. The army should always be exercised in warfare, lest for want of practice they become self-indulgent." It was only after Akbar had become master of most of northern India that patriotic urge and humanitarian sentiments influenced his policy. During the second half of his reign he was undoubtedly inspired by the ancient Hindu ideal of attempting to bring about the political unity of the entire country and of giving security and happiness to the people of the land.

The conquest of Malwa, 1561

The first conquest, after Bairam's exit, was that of the province of Malwa. Its ruler, Baz Bahadur, son of Shujaat Khan, governor of the province during the reigns of Sher Shah and his son Islam Shah, was devoted to music and was fond of the company of dancers and singers. Among them the most famous was his mistress Rup Mati, who was renowned for her beauty and poetic talents. The administration of the province, allowed to take its own course, was naturally weak. Adham Khan, son of Maham Anaga, was selected, due to his mother's influence, for leading an expedition against Sarangpur, the then capital of Malwa. Baz Bahadur took no notice of the invader until the latter had reached within 20 miles of Sarangpur. The immediate threat to his life, however, aroused him from his 'dreams of love and music' and issuing out of his palace at the head of his demoralized and discontented troops, he fought a battle at a distance of three miles from Sarangpur on March 29, 1561. He was badly defeated and fled from the field. All the treasure, property and family of Baz Bahadur, including his beloved Rup Mati, fell into the hands of the victors. Adham Khan was eager to obtain possession of Rup Mati, but she took poison in order to save her honour. Adham Khan and Pir Muhammad inflicted untold misery on the people of the province.

Appropriating most of the spoils, including women and elephants, Adham Khan sent only a fraction of what he had seized at Sarangpur. This together with the reports of the barbarities committed by him in Malwa enraged Akbar beyond measure. He left Agra on 27th April for Malwa in order to punish Adham Khan.

Adham was dismayed to find the Emperor at Sarangpur on 13th May; he humbled himself before him and begged for his forgiveness. He was pardoned only when Maham Anaga had hastened to the place and interceded for her son. She concealed her son's crimes by having two beauties of Baz Bahadur's *harem* put to death, lest they should disclose the ill-treatment meted out to them and other victims by Adham Khan. Akbar then returned to Agra, leaving Adham Khan as governor of Malwa.

The journey from and back to Agra was performed in a hurried fashion and in the hottest weather. Like Alexander the Great, Akbar was indifferent to heat and cold and invariably displayed great personal courage and daring in the midst of danger. During his return journey to Agra near Narwar he killed a lioness with one blow of his sword. He took delight in mastering wild elephants and other ferocious animals.

Rebellion in Jaunpur and acquisition of Chunar, 1561

While Malwa was being reduced to subjection by Adham Khan, there occurred a serious rebellion in the province of Jaunpur which was then the eastern part of Akbar's dominions. Sher Khan, son of the late Muhammad Adil Shah Sur, collected a large army consisting of 20,000 cavalry, 50,000 infantry and 500 elephants, and invaded Jaunpur. This caused a great consternation among the people. But Khan Zaman (Ali Quli Khan), the governor, put up a stiff resistance and was soon re-inforced by an imperial force. Although the rebel army was far superior in number, it was badly defeated and put to flight. After this victory Khan Zaman displayed an inclination to rebel. Like Adham Khan, he appropriated most of the Afghan elephants and equipage and sent only nominal spoils to Agra. Akbar thought it necessary to chastise the delinquent governor and, acting with his usual promptitude, hastened towards Jaunpur in the heat of July. Khan Zaman and his brother Bahadur were terrified and met the emperor at Kara and, placing all the elephants at his disposal, begged his forgiveness. With his usual magnanimity Akbar accepted Khan Zaman's submission and sent him back as governor of Jaunpur. At the same time he dispatched Asaf Khan to wrest Chunargarh from the hands of the Afghans. In August 1561, Chunar was acquired and it became an out-post of the empire in the east.

Submission of and alliance with Jaipur, 1562

In November 1561, Shams-ud-din Atga Khan was appointed prime minister. At the end of the year Adham Khan, whose administration was highly tyrannical, was recalled from Malwa and Pir Muhammad was promoted to his place. In January 1562, Akbar made his first pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chishti of Ajmer. On the way he received Bhar Mal, ruler of Amber (Jaipur) and the first Rajput king to acknowledge his suzerainty, and accepted the hand of his daughter. The marriage took place at Sambhar at the end of January during the emperor's halt on his return journey to Agra. The princess became the mother of Jahangir and exerted great influence on Akbar and his policy. The marriage, unlike those contracted by the previous Sultans with Hindu ladies, was voluntary. It cemented the alliance between the two ruling houses of Delhi and Jaipur. Akbar took Bhagwan Das, the adopted son of Bhar Mal, and the latter's grandson, Man Singh, into his service and treated them as his relatives.

Acquisition of Merta, 1562

At about this time Mirza Sharaf-ud-din, a prominent officer who held an assignment near Ajmer, was deputed to reduce the fortress of Merta in Marwar. It was in possession of Jaimal, the future defender of Chittor and a vassal of Udaya Singh of Mewar. The fortress surrendered after a brief siege and the garrison was promised safe conduct on the condition of the delivery of the fortress with all its ammunition and other equipage. Some of the Rajputs under Deva Das, however, offered resistance and set fire to the military stores and attacked the Mughuls. But, inspite of their gallantry, all of them, numbering 200, were overwhelmed and slain along with their leader. Merta then passed into the hands of the Mughuls.

Rebellion in Malwa, 1562

The tyrannical conduct of Mulla Pir Muhammad, the new governor, made the Mughul rule unpopular in Malwa. The Mulla committed great atrocities on the helpless population, sparing neither age, nor rank nor even sex. Baz Bahadur, who had in 1560 fled to Khandesh, carried on depredations in the southern districts of the province, and in alliance with his protector, Mubarak II, and Tufal Khan of Berar, launched an attack on the Mulla. Pir Muhammad was obliged to proceed against the invader, but was

defeated and driven back. While crossing the river Narmada his horse was upturned by a camel and he was drowned. Baz Bahadur was thus able to recover his kingdom. His success, however, was short-lived. Akbar dispatched an army under Abdulla Khan Uzbeg who drove away Baz Bahadur into exile and re-occupied Malwa. Having suffered from misery and privation during his adventurous flight from court to court, Baz Bahadur thought it politic to submit to Akbar in the 15th year of his reign. He was enrolled as a *mansabdar* of 1,000 and was subsequently promoted to the rank of 2,000.

Conquest of Gondwana, 1564

In 1564 Akbar directed Asaf Khan to subdue the ten-century-old Gond kingdom of Garha-Katanga, which extended from Ratanpur in the east to Raisin in the west and Rewa in the north to the frontier of the Dakhin in the south, and comprised the northern districts of the modern Madhya Pradesh. Its ruler was Rani Durgavati, a Chandel princess of Mahoba and regent of her son Vir Narayan. Though the young raja had attained majority, he allowed his mother to carry on the administration. Durgavati was a brave and wise ruler. She possessed a powerful army of 20,000 horse, 1,000 elephants and a large number of infantry, and had successfully defended her kingdom against the aggressive attacks of Baz Bahadur and the Afghans of Malwa. In pursuance of his settled policy of aggressive conquests, Akbar planned an attack on Gondwana without any provocation. The army of invasion under Asaf Khan consisted of 50,000 troops. The Rani faced them bravely with her greatly inferior force and resisted them for two days at Narhi to the east of Garha. Vir Narayan was wounded and obliged to withdraw at the request of his mother and this further weakened her small army. Inspite of her brave stand the Rani, too, was wounded with two arrows. She stabbed herself to death in order to avoid capture and dishonour. The invader now marched to Chauragarh where Vir Narayan bravely offered battle, but he was defeated and killed. His women offered *jauhar*. Asaf Khan acquired an immense booty, which included gold, silver, jewels and 1,000 elephants. He sent only 200 elephants to Akbar and retained the rest of the spoils for himself. At this time Akbar was not powerful enough to punish him for his delinquency.

Siege of Chittor, 1567-1568

In September 1567 Akbar resolved to conquer Chittor, the

capital of Mewar, whose ruler, Udaya Singh, looked upon the emperor as an 'unclean foreigner' and had nothing but contempt for Bharmal, ruler of Amber, who had not only submitted but also entered into a matrimonial alliance with him. Moreover, the Rana had given shelter to Baz Bahadur, the ex-king of Malwa. Mewar lay on the route to Gujarat which could not be easily conquered and the lines of communication between Delhi and Ahmadabad could not be safe without establishing imperial control over Chittor. But the most important cause of the proposed expedition was political. Without reducing Mewar, the premier state in Rajasthan, the ruler of which was universally acknowledged as the head of the Rajputs in the country, Akbar could not establish his claim of overlordship over northern India. Udaya Singh, the reigning king of Mewar, though denounced by Tod as an unworthy son of a worthy sire, was not altogether devoid of the qualities of a soldier, and made commendable arrangements for the defence of his capital. Akbar arrived before the gigantic fort on October 23 and invested it, assigning different sectors of its wide circumference to his officers and establishing many batteries on various points. It took about one month to complete the investment. The siege lasted for a long time as each side was determined to achieve its object—Akbar to capture the fort and the Sisodias to beat him back. As the rate of casualties among the imperial troops was about 200 a day, Akbar decided to construct mines and erect *sabats* (covered ways) for the approaches. Two mines were fired on December 17 but the garrison repaired the breaches immediately and drove back the assailants, killing 200 of them. There seemed little prospect of an early termination of the siege. By chance on February 23, 1568, Akbar fired a shot at a prominent man on the rampart of the fort who was directing defence operations and supervising the repair of a breach in the wall. He was Jaimal, to whom the defence of the fort was entrusted by the nobles, who, aware of Akbar's grim determination, had sometime after the commencement of the siege sent away their chief, Udaya Singh, to a place of safety in the Aravali hills. As Jaimal was fatally wounded, the Sisodias were filled with despair, and their ladies committed *jauhar* during the night. The flames rising from the funeral pyres convinced Akbar that the victim of his shot was Jaimal. The next morning the Rajputs decided to take up the offensive. According to tradition, Jaimal, although fatally wounded, was carried on his horse as the leader of the offensive. After his fall in the battle,

the command devolved on the young Sisodia noble Fateh Singh of Kailwa. Fatha, as he was popularly known, put on the yellow robes and accompanied by his wife and mother led the attack ; but the brave Rajputs were overpowered by superior numbers and slain to a man.

Akbar entered the fort the next day and ordered a general massacre, as his wrath was inflamed by the stiff resistance offered to his arms. The victims numbered 30,000. This act of needless brutality is a stain on Akbar's memory. He expatiated part of his guilt by commemorating the heroism of Jaimal and Fateh Singh by erecting their statues, mounted on elephants, at the gate of his palace at Agra. On February 20 he appointed Asaf Khan governor of Mewar, most of which was in the Rana's hands, and then returned to Agra.

The fall of Chittor was followed by the gratifying news that Sulaiman Karrani, the ruler of Patna, had accepted Akbar's proposal to recognise him as emperor and caused the *khutba* to be recited and coins struck in Akbar's name.

Acquisition of Ranthambhor, 1568

In April 1568, Akbar sent an expedition to reduce Ranthambhor, whose ruler, Raja Surjan Rai, was a Hara Rajput of Bundi and a vassal of the Rana of Mewar. But the army had to be recalled before reaching its destination owing to the invasion of Malwa by the rebellious Mirzas. In February 1569 Akbar was free to commence the siege of the fortress under his personal supervision. Mines were laid, a covered way (*sabat*) was constructed, and heavy cannon were dragged up to the eminence, opposite the Ran gate, from where they kept up a 'heavy fire'. The siege lasted for about a month and a half and caused considerable loss of life on both sides. The fort was, however, surrendered on March 18, 1569. There are two versions of the circumstances leading to the fall of Ranthambhor. According to Tod, the resistance offered by Surjan Rai was so stout that it was felt desirable to avoid a prolonged conflict and to induce the Hara chief to surrender. Bhagwan Das of Amber, therefore, paid a visit to Surjan Rai, and he was accompanied by Akbar in the disguise of his companion. The Rajputs recognised Akbar who revealed his identity and conducted the negotiations in person. This version of the story was accepted by V. A. Smith. The other version is that of the historian Badayuni, which has found favour with Woolseley Haig.

According to Badayuni, Surjan Rai, rightly feeling that when an impregnable fort like Chittor could not long withstand the imperial attack and there was no use continuing an unequal conflict, sent his sons Danda and Bhoj to wait on Akbar and beg for quarter. As Surjan Rai was a vassal of the Rana of Chittor, whose capital had already passed into the hands of Akbar, Badayuni's version seems more plausible. Akbar dictated peace to Surjan Rai, the terms of which were lenient, and returned to Agra.

Surrender of Kalinjar, 1569

The fall of the fortresses of Chittor and Ranthambhor added immensely to the prestige of the emperor. The only other fort in northern India, impregnable in the eyes of the people, that remained out of his control was that of Kalinjar in the modern Banda district of the Uttar Pradesh. It had defied Sher Shah, and was at this time in the possession of Raja Ram Chand of Rewa. In August 1569 Majnun Khan Qaqshal was despatched against him. Ram Chand, aware of the fate of Chittor and Ranthambhor, offered little resistance and submitted. The raja was given a *jagir* near Allahabad and Kalinjar was placed under the charge of Majnun Khan.

Submission of Marwar, 1570

In November 1570 Akbar paid a visit to Nagaur, where he received, through Bhagwan Das of Amber, the submission of the rulers of Jodhpur and Bikaner. Chandra Sen, son of Maldeva and the then ruler of Jodhpur, came and waited on the emperor. Rai Kalyan Mal of Bikaner and his son Rai Singh were also received in audience. Rawal Har Rai of Jaisalmer, too, submitted. Akbar married a princess of the Bikaner ruling family and also the daughter of Har Rai of Jaisalmer. Thus by the end of 1570 the whole of Rajasthan, except Mewar with its tributary states of Dungarpur, Banswara and Pratapgarh, recognised the suzerainty of Akbar.

Conquest of Gujarat, 1572-1573

The emperor now turned his attention to Gujarat, which he desired to conquer and annex to his kingdom. The province had for some time remained in the possession of his father. It was a rich emporium of commerce between India, Turkey, Syria, Persia, Trans-Oxiana and the countries of Europe and, therefore, very wealthy. Moreover, Gujarat lay on the way to Mecca, and Akbar was naturally anxious to bring it under his control in order to provide

safe journey to the Haj pilgrims. The condition of the province at this time was deplorable. Muzaffar Khan III, who was its nominal king, was powerless, and a bloody struggle for supremacy was in progress among his ambitious and selfish nobles. Akbar's rebellious relatives, the Mirzas, had taken shelter there and established themselves in several towns of this rich province. For these reasons Akbar thought it imperative to reduce Gujarat. Fortunately, a civil war was going on there and the party headed by Itimad Khan appealed to Akbar for intervention. Taking the opportunity Akbar made preparations for an expedition and sent forward 10,000 horse under Khan Kalan towards Ahmadabad, and in September 1572, himself set out to undertake the campaign. His army did not meet with great resistance and in November Akbar took possession of Ahmadabad. Muzaffar Khan III, the nominal ruler, was found hiding in a corn field and brought a prisoner. The leading nobles, including Itimad Khan, came and waited on Akbar, who appointed Khan Azam (Mirza Aziz Koka) governor of Gujarat. From Ahmadabad Akbar proceeded to Cambay, where he received the merchants of Turkey, Syria, Persia, Trans-Oxiana and Portugal. He then returned to Surat and defeated Ibrahim Mirza in the well-contested battle of Sarnal in December 1572. Next, Surat was besieged, and it fell into his hands in February 1573. After these successes he returned to Agra.

Rebellion in Gujarat, 1573

As soon as Akbar's back was turned Muhammad Husain Mirza, who had fled to Daultabad, returned to Gujarat. Forming an alliance with the disaffected nobles of the province, he besieged the governor, Khan Azam, in Ahmadabad. As Khan Azam was powerless against the rebels, Akbar, accompanied by a small army, left Fatehpur Sikri on August 23, 1573, and reached Ahmadabad, on September 2, having performed the long journey of more than 450 miles in eleven days all told. The rebels, who did not believe the report of the emperor's sudden arrival, were thunderstruck to find him at the head of the army of relief from Fatehpur Sikri. Contrary to the advice of his cautious officials, Akbar immediately crossed the river Sabarmati and charged the enemy. In the hand-to-hand fight, in which his horse was wounded and Akbar himself dangerously exposed, he defeated the rebels and took Muhammad Hussain Mirza a prisoner. Ikhtiyar-ul-Mulk, another principal rebel, who was watching the besieged

Khan Azam, turned up to contest the royal army, but was slain. The rebellion was now broken. Shah Mirza, the only rebel who escaped, became a homeless wanderer. After this grand success the emperor returned to Fatehpur Sikri on October 5, 1573. The historian Smith has rightly described Akbar's second Gujarat expedition as "the quickest campaign on record". The conquest of Gujarat pushed Akbar's western frontier to the sea and brought him into contact with the Portuguese, who made peace with him. It is a pity that the emperor did not think of building a navy for the protection of his empire and for commerce with the outer world.

Conquest of Bihar and Bangal, 1574-1576

Sulaiman Karrani, who had been governor of Bihar during the last days of Sher Shah's reign and asserted his independence on the fall of the Sur dynasty, and had, early in 1568, acknowledged Akbar as his sovereign, died in 1572. He had brought the province of Bangal and Orissa under his rule and transferred his capital to Tanda. But his son, Daud, proclaimed his independence, and further incurred Akbar's displeasure by attacking Zamania (in the Ghazipur district of Uttar Pradesh), then the eastern out-post of the Mughul empire. In 1574, Akbar undertook an expedition against the presumptuous youth and expelled him from Bihar, which province was now annexed to the empire. Daud fled from Bangal toward Orissa. Akbar left Munim Khan in charge of the Bangal campaign and returned to Fatehpur Sikri. Munim Khan defeated Daud at Tukarao near the eastern bank of the Suvarnarekha on March 3, 1575, and made Tanda his headquarters. But he did not push his advantage and allowed the fugitive king of Bangal to regain a part of his power. In October, Daud made an attempt to recover Bangal. Accordingly, a fresh campaign was organised and Daud was finally defeated and killed in battle near Rajmahal in July, 1576. Bangal was now finally annexed. But a few of the local chiefs, notably Kedar Rai of Vikrampur, Kandarp Narayan of Bekarganj, Pratapaditya of Jessor and Isa Khan in East Bangal, continued to give trouble for some years more.

Attempt to conquer Mewar ; Battle of Haldi Ghati, June 18, 1576

Although Chittor, the capital, and with it the eastern part of Mewar had been occupied in February 1568, a major portion of that kingdom remained under the control of Rana Udaya Singh. His indomitable warrior-son, Pratap, who was crowned king in highly

depressing circumstances at Gogunda, 19 miles north-west of Udaipur, on March 3, 1572, pledged to offer uncompromising resistance to the Mughuls. Undaunted by his slender resources, defection in his ranks, and the hostility of his own brother, Shakti Singh, he resolved to fight the aggression of one who was "immeasurably the richest monarch on the face of the earth". On his part Akbar was equally determined to wrest the remaining (western) part of Mewar from the hand of the valiant Rana. In April 1576, he sent a powerful army under Man Singh of Amber to invade the remnant of Mewar. From Mandal Garh (in eastern Mewar) Man Singh proceeded by way of Mohi (south of Raj Samudra Lake) towards Gogunda and encamped on the plain at the northern end of Haldi Ghati, a spur of the Aravalli chain, between that town and the village of Khamnaur on the southern bank of the river Banas. Here the imperial army was attacked by Pratap, who marched from Gogunda to check the advance of the invader on June 18, 1576. Tradition has magnified the Rana's army to twenty thousand horse and that of Man Singh to eighty thousand. The fact, however, is that the Mewar force did not exceed three thousand horse and a few hundred Bhil infantry. Man Singh commanded ten thousand picked cavalry of whom nearly four thousand were Kachhwaha Rajputs, one thousand other Hindus and the remaining were mostly central Asian Turks, Uzbegs, Kazzaqs, with a thousand Sayyids of Barha and Shaikhzadas of Fatehpur Sikri. The advance-guard (about 800 horse) of the tiny Mewar force was composed of Hakim Khan Sur, Bhim Singh of Dodia, Ram Das Rathor (son of Jaimal) and a few others, the right wing (500 horse) was under Ram Shah Tanwar of Gwalior and Bhama Shah, the left wing was under Bida Mana and the centre was commanded by the Rana himself. The Bhils of Punja and a band of other troops stood in the rear. The imperial army was preceded by a line of skirmishers under Sayyid Hashim of Barha. Its vanguard was commanded by Jagannath Kachhwaha and Ali Asaf Khan (a Kazvini Khwaja) and was strengthened by a powerful *iltmish* (advanced reserve) under Madho Singh Kachhwaha. The right wing was composed of the Sayyids of Barha, the left wing under Mulla Qazi Khan Badakhshi (later surnamed Ghazi Khan) and Rao Loon Karan of Sambhar, and the centre was under the command of Man Singh himself. Issuing from behind the Haldi Ghati the Rana made a frontal attack on the Mughul army which lay on the plain to the north-west of the foot-

track at the northern entrance of the *ghati*. So desperate was the charge that the Mughul vanguard and left wing were scattered and its right wing and centre were hard pressed. But the Rana's army was very small in number and he had no reserve or rear guard to back up his initial success. In his attempt, therefore, to break the enemy centre and right wing he hurled his war-elephants against them. But the arrows and bullets from the other side proved too much even for the death-defying Sisodia heroes. In the personal combat between the Kachhwaha and Sisodia heroes many of the latter fell victims to the Muslim bullets and arrows shot indiscriminately at the Rajputs by fanatics like Badayuni. Raja Ram Shah Tanwar, who figured in front of the Rana in the thick of fighting in order to shield him from attack was slain by Jagannath Kachhwaha. The imperial reserve now came to join the battle and a rumour spread that Akbar had arrived in person to assist Man Singh. The Rana was now surrounded by the enemy and was about to be cut off. But Bida Jhala snatched the crown from Pratap's head, rushed to the front and cried out that he was the Rana. The enemy crowded round him and the pressure on Pratap was released. At this critical time some faithful soldiers seized the reins of the Rana's horse and took him safely to the rear of the line. Bida fell fighting loyally to save his master. At this the Rana's men lost heart and turned away from the field, leaving a large number of their dead behind. The battle of Haldi Ghati was over. The loss on both the sides was very heavy, the Rana losing nearly half of the entire force. The imperial troops were so much exhausted that they could not think of pursuing the Rana and passed the dreadful night in apprehension of a surprise attack. In fact, they could not gauge the magnitude of their success until next morning. The Rana evacuated Gogunda, and Man Singh then made arrangements for its occupation.

Notwithstanding his best efforts, Man Singh did not succeed in reducing that fraction of Mewar (north-western region including Kumbhalgarh and Deosuri) which still remained in the hands of the Rana. He could not hold Gogunda for long owing to want of provisions and the hostility of the people. Neither his threats nor persuasion would bring Pratap round. The indomitable Sisodia king, though reduced to starvation on more than one occasion, did not condescend to lower his pride and acknowledge Akbar's suzerainty, much less to agree to a matrimonial alliance with him. Man Singh fell in disfavour with Akbar for his failure and was recalled to

court. It is erroneously supposed that Akbar, moved by sentiments of chivalrous regard for his great adversary, left him unmolested for the rest of his life. The truth, however, is that Akbar did not relax his attempt to reduce the Rana. But all his attempts failed ; and Pratap succeeded in recovering possession of the greater part of his ancestral territory. The Rana's death on January 19, 1597, however, provided Akbar an opportunity to reduce Mewar to submission. But, as the emperor was then engaged in other quarters, he could not seize the opportunity. Although he sent more than one expedition against Amar Singh, son and successor of Pratap, Mewar could not be conquered and annexed.

Reduction of Kabul, 1581

In 1580 many prominent Muslim officials in Bihar and Bangal, who were opposed to Akbar's policy of absolute religious toleration and were hard hit by his administrative, financial and military reforms, rose in revolt and formed a conspiracy to depose him and give the throne to his half-brother, Mirza Muhammad Hakim of Kabul. Accustomed to a preferential religious treatment, they could not brook Akbar's policy of placing the diverse faiths in the land on a footing of equality with Islam and fancied that their religion was in danger. Mulla Muhammad Yazdi, the *qazi* of Jaunpur, promulgated an authoritative decree (*fatwa*) that rebellion against Akbar was a religious duty. The Qaqshal Turks, who held prominent posts in Bangal, followed the example of their co-religionists in Bihar who were the first to rebel and read the *khutba* in Mirza Hakim's name. They besieged the governor, Muzaffar Khan, in Tanda and defeated an imperial army which was sent to reinforce Muzaffar Khan. The rebellion now spread over the whole of the two provinces. Akbar, rightly realising that the source of the real danger was his own brother, made suitable military preparations to proceed and attack Kabul, sending at the same time adequate troops to Bihar and Bangal to put down the rebels and to prevent them from proceeding to join Mirza Hakim. He took prompt action against the traitors at his court, who were in treasonable correspondence with his step-brother. He imprisoned some and put others, including their leader Shah Mansur, to death in order to strike terror into the hearts of the disaffected. Hakim, who had crossed the Indus and advanced to Lahore, was disappointed to find that contrary to the information conveyed to him, the Muslims of the

Panjab did not even move their little finger to assist him. Before Akbar had reached Macchiwara on March 8, 1581, Mirza Hakim was on his hurried retreat towards Kabul. Akbar quickly reached the Indus and sent a force under Man Singh to occupy Kabul, himself following the Raja without loss of time. Hakim fled from Kabul to Ghurband and Akbar entered Kabul on August 10. The terrified Hakim sent messages of submission and was pardoned. But Akbar appointed his step-sister (and Mirza's real sister) Bakht-un-Nisa Begam governor of Kabul and returned to Fatehpur Sikri. After his departure Hakim took the *de facto* charge of the administration, but his sister continued to be the official governor. Mirza Hakim died in July 1585, and Kabul was then incorporated as a province of the empire.

The year 1581 has been described as the most critical year of Akbar's life since his assumption of authority in 1560. The emperor's resourcefulness, tact and ability enabled him to get the better of his enemies and to emerge from the struggle more powerful than before.

Annexation of Kashmir, 1585

Akbar had for long cherished the ambition of reducing Kashmir to submission by diplomacy and failing that by force of arms. Though Yusuf Khan, the Sultan of Kashmir, sent his third son in 1581 and the elder one in 1585 to wait on Akbar, he had evaded appearing in person. With the object of overawing him into submission and also making arrangements for the incorporation of Kabul as a province of the empire, Akbar left Fatehpur Sikri for Lahore in the autumn of 1585. He reached Rawalpindi early in December and thence moved to Attock. He dispatched Zain Khan Kakaltash and Raja Birbal and Hakim Abul Fateh to chastise the Yusufzai and Mandar tribes of the frontier region, as they had become troublesome. But the imperial troops did not fare well in the battle that followed and Raja Birbal was killed. Akbar was much grieved and he censured Zain Khan and Abul Fateh for their defeat and failure to recover Raja Birbal's body. Raja Todar Mal, who now sent to avenge the defeat, reduced the tribesmen to submission. Man Singh, who was commissioned to join him defeated the Afghans in a battle in the Khybar Pass. The tribesmen, though not thoroughly subdued, gave no further trouble to the Government.

Simultaneously with the expedition against the tribesmen, Akbar made arrangements for the reduction of Kashmir and entrusted the

work to Qasim Khan, Raja Bhagwan Das and some other commanders. The imperial army proceeded towards Srinagar early in 1586, but was disheartened owing to rain and snow and agreed to make peace with Sultan Yusuf Khan, who, feeling himself weak, met the imperial generals and sought for terms. Yusuf Khan recognised Akbar as his sovereign and agreed to the recitation of the *khutba* and the issuing of coins in the emperor's name. He also consented to the appointment of imperial officers to take charge of the mint, saffron cultivation, manufacture of shawls and regulation of game in Kashmir. Akbar disapproved of the treaty, and, when Sultan Yusuf Khan and his son Yaqub Khan came to wait on him, he ordered the Sultan to be arrested ; but Yaqub Khan escaped to Srinagar and made preparations for resistance. Akbar thereupon sent an army against him which compelled him to surrender. Kashmir was now annexed to the empire and became a *sarkar* of the province of Kabul. Yusuf Khan was released after some time and appointed a mansabdar of 500.

Conquest of Sindh, 1591

Akbar had acquired the island fortress of Bhakkar as early as 1574. He now coveted the southern part of Sindh at the mouth of the Indus without which his supremacy over north-western India could not be considered as complete. Moreover, he wanted to use it as a base of operations against Kandhar, then in the possession of Shah Abbas of Persia. In 1590 the emperor appointed Abdur Rahman, now ennobled with his father's title of *Khan Khana*, governor of Multan, with instructions to conquer the principality of Thatta (lower Sindh) from its Turkoman ruler, Mirza Jani Beg. The latter fought two battles in defence of his country, but was defeated and compelled to surrender his entire territory, including the fortresses of Thatta and Sehwan (1591). He entered the imperial service and was enrolled as *mansabdar* of 3,000 and a member of *Din Ilahi*.

Conquest of Orissa, 1592

In 1590, Raja Man Singh, governor of Bihar, invaded Orissa and prepared to attack Qutulu Khan Lohani, who had set himself up as the ruler of that distant province. Qutulu Khan died before he could meet Man Singh in battle. His son, Nisar Khan, after a feeble resistance, submitted and was confirmed as governor. But two years later he repudiated the treaty and seized the crown-lands of Puri and Jagannath. Raja Man Singh defeated and expelled the rebel. The

province was now annexed to the empire and became a part of the *suba* of Bangal.

Conquest of Baluchistan, 1595

In February 1595, Mir Masum was deputed to conquer Baluchistan, which was the only principality in northern India that had not yet acknowledged Akbar's authority. The gifted general attacked the fortress of Sibi, north-east of Quetta, and compelled the Pani Afghans, who were defeated, to deliver the whole of Baluchistan including Makran, the region near the coast, into the hands of the imperialists.

Acquisition of Kandhar, 1595

In April 1595, the Persian governor of Kandhar, Muzaffar Husain Mirza, who was not on good terms with the authorities at Tehran, peacefully delivered the powerful fortress into the hands of Shah Beg, an officer whom Akbar had deputed for the purpose. Muzaffar Hussain Mirza was received with honour and appointed a mansabdar of 5,000 horse and given the *jagir* at Sambhal. The acquisition of Kandhar completed Akbar's conquests in northern India, the whole of which, except a small fraction of Mewar, was now in his possession.

Conquest of Khandesh and a part of Ahmadnagar, 1593-1601 ; Akbar's Dakhin Policy

Even before he brought the whole of northern India in his possession and gave it political administrative unity, Akbar had cherished the ambition of conquering all the four existing Sultanates of the Dakhin into which the old Bahamani kingdom had split. In August 1591 he despatched four diplomatic missions severally to Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda, calling upon their rulers to recognise his suzerainty and pay him tribute. Raja Ali Khan, the ruler of Khandesh, whose territory lay immediately south of Akbar's empire, offered to acknowledge the emperor's authority ; but those of the other three States politely rejected the offer. Accordingly in 1593, Akbar commissioned Abdur Rahim *Khan Khana* to reduce Ahmadnagar by force. Accompanied by the emperor's second son, Murad, who was associated with him in the command, the Khan Khana besieged Ahmadnagar, which was heroically defended by the gallant Chand Bibi, Queen-Dowager of Bijapur and an aunt of the reigning king Muzaffar of Ahmadnagar. Torn by

dissensions, the imperial generals raised the siege and made peace in 1596, recognising the grandson of Burhan-ul-Mulk, named Bahadur, then a child, as Sultan of Ahmadnagar, under the suzerainty of Akbar. The new Sultan ceded Berar to the empire and sent valuable presents to Agra.

The peace lasted for a short duration only. Very soon the Ahmadnagar government broke the terms of the treaty and attempted to recover Berar. In 1597, the *Khan Khana* was obliged to renew operations. The imperialists gained an indecisive victory. The Mughul cause suffered severely on account of dissensions between Murad and the *Khan Khana.* Akbar, therefore, decided to recall both of them and to appoint Abul Fazl in their place. He prepared to march in person to the Dakhin. Daulatabad fell before his arrival, in 1599. Then Ahmadnagar was besieged and captured in August 1600. The young king Bahadur Nizam Shah was taken prisoner and sent to Gwalior ; but the nobles of Ahmadnagar set up another puppet and continued to resist the Mughul arms.

Before the fall of Ahmadnagar, the king of Khandesh, Miran Bahadur Shah, whose father, Raja Ali Khan, had died fighting on the side of his Mughul suzerain in a battle with Ahmadnagar, had repudiated the Mughul authority and prepared to defend himself in his strong fortress of Asirgarh. Akbar resolved to attack him. Early in 1599, he entered Khandesh, took possession of its capital, Burhanpur, and besieged the impregnable fortress of Asirgarh, which was well provided with artillery, war-like stores and provisions. The siege continued for a long time and Abul Fazl was sent to supervise the operations and infuse vigour into the besiegers. The imperialists carried an important outwork which frightened Miran Bahadur and he submitted to Akbar on December 21, 1600. The garrison continued to resist for a few days more, but surrendered the fortress on January 6, 1601. Khandesh was now annexed to the empire. Miran Bahadur was sent a prisoner to Gwalior and was granted a subsistance allowance of 4,000 *ashrafis* a year. Vincent Smith has charged Akbar with gross perfidy in his dealings with Miran Bahadur ; but, as Woolseley Haig has rightly pointed out, Miran Bahadur was as much to blame as Akbar, for "each strove to outwit the other." Akbar's main guilt in connection with the siege of Asirgarh was his order to put Muqarrab, son of the commandant of the fort, to death without a reason.

This was Akbar's last conquest.

Consolidation of the conquests

Akbar invariably followed the policy of giving an organised administration to his conquests. As soon as a principality or a province was reduced to submission, he took steps to establish therein complete order and peace, and to appoint civil officers to carry out a revenue settlement, which was based on the principles of measurement and classification of the land. Religious toleration was extended to the newly conquered areas. Social, religious, as well as administrative reforms were introduced and the interest of the people, social, moral and material, was consulted. As will be shown hereafter, Akbar, unlike his predecessors, including Sher Shah, gave a uniform system of administration of all the provinces of his empire and paved the way for the establishment of common nationality in the land.

REBELLIONS

Revolt of Abdullah Khan Uzbeg, 1564

Most of the Mughul officials, who had long been in service from the time of Humayun, felt dissatisfied with Akbar's policy of centralisation. They wanted not only autonomy in their respective jurisdiction but also semi-independent status with right and power to do as they liked. Adham Khan, Pir Muhammad and Khan Zaman had behaved as if they were kings in their provinces. Abdullah Khan Uzbeg, governor of Malwa, followed in their footsteps and prepared to rise in rebellion. In July 1564 Akbar proceeded to punish him. For a fortnight he was detained on the way by heavy rain on the bank of the Chambal. On his approach, Abdullah fled from Mandu, but Akbar pursued and defeated him. Abdullah's women and elephants fell into his hands. Qara Bahadur Khan was appointed governor of Malwa. After establishing friendly relations with Mubarak Shah II of Khandesh, whose daughter he married, and successfully persuading the ruler of Gujarat to banish the rebel, Abdullah, from his territory, Akbar returned to Agra in October.

The Uzbeg rebellion, 1564-1567

Among the old nobility of Akbar's court, the Uzbegs formed a most influential and turbulent section. Their leaders were Khan Zaman (Ali Quli Khan), governor of Jaunpur, his brother Bahadur,

their uncle Ibrahim Khan, Khan Alam (Iskandar Khan), governor of Awadh, and Abdullah Khan, who was recently driven out of Malwa. They held important assignments and commanded powerful bodies of troops. Khan Zaman and Khan Alam had ably assisted Bairam Khan and rendered valuable service in re-establishing the Mughul rule in northern India. Feeling that their services had not been adequately rewarded, they nursed a grievance against their young sovereign. Moreover, they disliked Akbar's policy of centralisation and his 'Persianised ways' and were filled with a desire to retain their semi-independent status and freedom to act as they liked. Their descent from a common stock and family connections, besides the common fancied grievance at the hands of the king, had made them resolve to sink or swim together. They rose in revolt and planned a campaign against Akbar. It was decided that Ibrahim and Khan Alam should attack Kanauj, while at the same time, Khan Zaman and Bahadur should capture Manikpur. Khan Zaman and his brother defeated the royal troops and obtained possession of Manikpur. Khan Alam and Ibrahim defeated another royal army in May 1565. The situation was so menacing that Akbar was obliged to take the field in person. He made a surprise attack on Khan Alam near Lucknow and put him to flight. Khan Alam joined Khan Zaman, who was besieging Manikpur. But on hearing that Akbar had occupied Lucknow, they abandoned the siege and fled into the marshy land of Bahraich and from there withdrew to Hajipur in Bihar. The rebellion lasted for more than two years during the course of which Akbar thought it prudent to forgive the rebels more than once. But as they were not prepared to abandon their pretensions to a feudal aristocracy, he had to take the field again and crush the Uzbegs finally. In January Khan Zaman was killed and the Uzbeg rebellion came to an end. Akbar was now free to centralise power in his own hands and reduce the old nobility to the status of mere officials whom he could appoint and dismiss at will.

Mirza Hakim's invasion of India, 1566-1567

Encouraged by the Uzbeg rebellion, the leaders of which were in communication with him, Mirza Muhammad Hakim, Akbar's step-brother and governor of Kabul, invaded the Panjab in the hope that he would be supported by the assignees in that province. He proceeded by way of Bhera to Lahore where he was opposed by Khan Kalan. On receipt of the news, Akbar set out from Agra on

November 16, 1566, and, as he reached Delhi, Muhammad Hakim beat a hasty retreat. Akbar, however, continued his march and reached Lahore at the end of January 1567. A contingent of troops was sent to pursue the fugitive ; it returned after Hakim had crossed back to the other side of the Indus.

Rebellion of the Mirzas

While at Lahore, Akbar received reports of a rebellion of the Mirzas in the Sambhal and Azampur districts. The rebels, Ibrahim Husain Mirza, Muhammad Husain Mirza, Masud Husain Mirza and Aqil Husain Mirza and their two nephews, Sikandar Mirza and Mahmud Mirza (Shah Mirza), who joined them, were descendants of Timur's second son and were blood relations of Akbar. Probably their rebellion was due to their belief that, being connected by blood with the ruling family, they deserved a more handsome provision for their maintenance. Following the example of Muhammad Zaman Mirza and Muhammad Sultan Mirza of the time of Humayun, they obtained forcible possession of the crown-lands in their neighbourhood. Munim Khan defeated and drove them into Malwa. But as they indulged in guerilla tactics and fled from place to place, they could not be completely reduced till 1573. The time coincided with the Uzbeg rebellion and the latter's invitation to Mirza Hakim to make another attempt against Akbar. But, as we have already seen, the Uzbegs suffered defeat and their leader, Khan Zaman, was killed in battle and his brother, Bahadur Khan, was executed. The rebellion of the Mirzas also came to an end almost simultaneously with the end of the Uzbeg menace. The Mirzas were hunted down and expelled from Malwa whence they fled to Gujarat. They were finally beaten and exterminated when Akbar undertook his second expedition to that province in 1573. The last important of his nobles who had been closely connected with his family since the time of his father occurred in 1580, and was so widespread as to constitute a grave threat to Akbar's life and throne. But it was successfully crushed, as we have seen, in 1581 after which year the emperor had no opposition to face from the old peers.

Policy towards the Rajputs

Akbar's treatment of the Rajputs was not the outcome of thoughtless sentiment or a mere chivalrous regard for their valour, generosity and patriotism. It was the result of a deliberate policy and was based on the principles of enlightened self-interest, recognition

of merit, justice and fair play. Akbar had realised at an early age that his Muslim officials and followers, foreign mercenaries as they were, acted principally for their own ends and could not be absolutely depended upon. Almost from the day of his accession he had to face rebels in his own camp and court. From Shah Abdul Mali, who displayed contumacy and refused to attend Akbar's coronation durbar (16th February, 1556), to Shah Mansur, who, though raised to the exalted office of prime minister, traitorously backed up Mirza Muhammad Hakim (1580), we have a long list of Muslim rebels against the authority of one to whom they owned their position and importance in the world. Even Bairam Khan rose against his sovereign (1560), though in a half-hearted fashion, and stained the record of his lifelong loyal services. Next, Maham Anaga proved to be highly unprincipled and selfish. Her son, Adham Khan, disregarded Akbar's authority (1561) and misappropriated most of the booty in Malwa, and, a little later, killed the prime minister, Atga Khan, and, on being reprimanded, had the audacity to catch hold of Akbar's arms (1562). The rebellions of Asaf Khan I and Abdullah Khan Uzbeg, in 1564, were followed by that of Khan Zaman, one of the highest nobles in the empire, who with his Uzbeg kinsmen menanced (1565-67) Akbar's throne and life. Then occurred the rising of the Mirzas, Akbar's relatives, which lasted till after 1573, and recalled to memory the troubles which Humayun had to face at the hands of his unworthy brothers and relations (Mirzas). The rebellions of those very people on whom depended the Mughul authority in a foreign land and over an alien people, and occurring, as they did, so frequently, convinced Akbar, while he was yet a boy, that the only way to perpetuate his power and dynasty was to seek the support of the important political elements in the population of the country. Moreover, the Afghan opposition to the Mughuls, whom the former considered as usurpers of their birth-right, had not died out. The men of this race still dominated Bihar, Bangal and Orissa, to say nothing of their homeland in the frontier region and Kabul. Sher Khan, son of the late Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah, was preparing to overthrow the Mughul power in the eastern parts of the modern Uttar Pradesh (1561), and Sulaiman Karrani was fast becoming the leader of the Afghans in India. Akbar was shrewd enough to realise what his father and grandfather had failed to see that the Rajputs, who held large areas in their possession and were

masters of legions and renowned for their valour and fidelity to their word, could safely be depended upon and converted into friends. Hence he decided to seek their co-operation and use them as a counterpoise against his self-seeking Mughul, Uzbeg, Persian and Afghan nobles and officials. In pursuance of this policy, he accepted the submission of Raja Bhar Mal of Amber (Jaipur) and welcomed a matrimonial alliance with that Kachhwaha ruling family in Jaunary 1562. He took Bhagwan Das and Man Singh into his service, and soon discovered that they were more loyal and serviceable than most of his top-ranking Muslim followers. It was, in fact, only after he had tested the Kachhwaha loyalty and devotion that he decided to invite other Rajput chiefs in the land to accept him as their suzerain and join his service on a footing of equality with the highest of his Muslim officials and commanders. He shrewdly guessed that, if left in the possession of their autonomous States and treated honourably, they would accept the offer. He was right. One after another, all the States of Rajasthan entered into alliance with him and were enrolled as *mansabdars*. But this result was not achieved without military demonstration and even fight. Merta fell in 1562, Ranthambhor in 1568. In 1570 Marwar, Bikaner and Jaisalmer submitted without resistance. Other States in Rajasthan and Central India followed suit. Mewar alone disdainfully rejected the proposal and, inspite of a prolonged siege, during which its capital, Chittor, was lost, and almost continued warfare thereafter, it remained aloof even though the collateral branches of its ruling family which held the independent states of Dungarpur, Banswara and Pratapgarh, had submitted to Akbar in 1577. Akbar was generous enough to forget the resistance and even grim fighting offered by some of the Rajputs, and admit them to the same privilege and honour in his service as he had shown to those who had submitted without fighting. Being peculiarly free from religious fanaticism, he, unlike the Sultans of Delhi, did not brand the Rajputs as infidels or political inferiors. Nor did he, during the course of his campaigns in their lands, indulge in the sacrilegious policy of temple destroying and image breaking, of which his predecessors had been guilty. In fact, he looked upon the highest among them, who had entered into matrimonial alliances, as his relatives. The result was that the Rajputs, who had not only held aloof but fought stubbornly and consistently against the Turko-Afghan Sultans of Delhi for more than 350 years, became staunch

supporters of the Mughul throne and a most effective instrument for the spread of Mughul rule in the country. They contributed freely and richly to the military, political, administrative, economic, social, cultural and artistic achievements of Akbar's reign. Their co-operation not only gave security and permanence to the Mughul rule, but also brought about an unprecedented economic prosperity and cultural renaissance in the country, and a synthesis of the Hindu and Muslim cultures, which is a priceless legacy of the Mughul rule.

Evolution of Akbar's religious policy

Akbar was born and brought up in comparatively liberal surroundings. His father was a Mughul *Sunni*, his mother a Persian *Shia*, and he first saw the light and lived for about a month, in the house of a Hindu chief. Though orthodox in his religious views, Humayun had to conform outwardly with the principles of *Shiaism*, and his most loyal officer and commander Bairam Khan was a confirmed *Shia*. Bairam Khan who subsequently became Akbar's guardian and protector, was responsible for moulding his conduct and shaping his policy. Akbar's most notable tutor, Abul Latif, who was so liberal in his religious views as to be dubbed a *Sunni* in the *Shia* country of Persia and a *Shia* in the *Sunni* ridden northern India, taught him the principle of *Suleh-i-kul* (universal peace) which Akbar never forgot. Thus heredity and environment combined to influence Akbar's religious views in the direction of liberalism. By nature he was incapable of religious fanaticism and though, after Bairam Khan's fall, he had, sometimes during the next few years, been persuaded to sanction measures of persecution against a few notable Muslim 'heretics', he never really gave evidence of narrow religious bigotry. Even before he was twenty, he abolished the pernicious practice of enslaving the prisoners of war and converting them to Islam. Profoundly religious in the correct sense of the term, he often pondered over the problems of life and death, and on completing his twentieth year he was seized with remorse caused by the difficulty of reconciling religion and politics. "On the completion of my twentieth year," said Akbar, "I experienced an internal bitterness and from the lack of spirtual provision for my last journey, my soul was seized with exceeding sorrow." This spiritual awakening became responsible for the abolition of a tax, in 1563, on Hindu pilgrims visiting their holy shrines, in all the parts of his empire. Next year a more revolutionary measure was enacted. It was the abolition of the hated *jizya*

or poll-tax on non-Muslims, which all previous Turko-Afghan Sultans and even his father and grandfather had thought it a religious duty to realise. Although this measure marked a fundamental departure in his religious policy, Akbar, nevertheless, in his personal life, continued for many years to be a good, though tolerant, Muslim. We have it on the testimony of the contemporary historian Badayuni that not only did Akbar say his daily five prayers and go through other observances of his religion, but in gratefulness to the Almighty for bestowing on him territory, wealth and power, he spent early hours of dawn every day in meditating on Him and uttering *Ya Hu* ! *Ya Hadi* ! etc., in orthodox Muslim fashion. He sought the company of Muslim religious men and every year devoutly performed the pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chishti at Ajmer. Possessed of an inquisitive bent of mind, he desired to understand the principles of his religion. With this object in view, early in 1575, he erected a building at Fatehpur Sikri, entitled *Ibadat Khana* (House of Worship), in which regular religious discussions were held on Thursday evenings. In the beginning, the debates were confined to the Muslims : Shaikhs, Sayyids, the Ulema and the Muslim nobles alone were invited to attend the meetings. The orthodox *Sunni* party, headed by Mulla Abdullah of Sultanpur, entitled Makhdum-ul-Mulk, and Shaikh Abdun-Nabi, the chief *Sadr*, took a prominent part in the discussions. But as it was divided against itself, it soon lost its influence with Akbar. Makhdum-ul-Mulk and Abdun-Nabi quarrelled among themselves on fundamental questions of Islamic theology and openly exhibited unworthy intolerance to each other's views. Some of the learned scholars called their opponents names and all imputed motives to one another. "All at once one night," writes Badayuni, "the veins of the neck of the *Ulema* of the age swelled up and a horrid noise and confusion ensued. His Majesty got very angry at their rude behaviour." Such occurrences in the House were by no means uncommon. On hearing that Haji Ibrahim had issued a *fatwa* legalising the use of yellow and red dress, "Mir Adil, Sayyid Muhammad, in the imperial presence called him an accursed wretch, abused him and lifted his stick to strike him..." Their irresponsible behaviour and quarrels, their inability to explain satisfactorily the fundamental doctrines of Islam and their personal greed and unworthy conduct convinced Akbar that truth must be sought outside their bickerings.

Now began the second stage in the evolution of Akbar's religious ideas. His belief in orthodox Islam was shaken. He threw open the debates to members of other faiths, such as Hindus, Jains, Zoroastrians and Christians. On June 22, 1579, he mounted the pulpit at the principal mosque at Fatehpur Sikri, and read the *khutba*, in verse composed by the Poet Laureate, Faizi. In September Shaikh Mubarak, the father of Faizi and Abul Fazl, produced at the emperor's instance a formal document (*Mahzar*) giving Akbar the supreme authority of an arbiter in all controversial causes concerning Islam in the country whether they were ecclesiastical or civil. This document was signed by all important Muslim divines, including Makhdum-ul-Mulk and Abdun-Nabi. The following is the text of the document :

"Whereas Hindustan is now become the centre of security and peace, and the land of justice and benevolence, so that numbers of the higher and lower orders of the people, and especially learned men possessed of divine knowledge, and subtle jurists who are guides to salvation and travellers in the path of the diffusion of learning have immigrated to this land from Arabia and Persia, and have domiciled themselves here ; now we, the principal *Ulema*, who are not only well versed in the several departments of the law and the principles of jurisprudence, and well acquainted with the adicts based on reason and testimony, but are also known for our piety and honest intentions, have duly considered the deep meaning, first, of the verse of the *Quran*, 'Obey God and obey the Prophet, and those who are invested with authority among you,' and, secondly, of the genuine Tradition, 'Surely the man who is dearest to God on the Day of Judgment is the just leader ; whosoever obeys the *Amir* obeys Me, and whosoever rebels against him rebels against Me,' and, thirdly, of several other proofs based on reason and testimony ; and we have agreed that the rank of Just King is higher in the eyes of God than that of *Mujtahid*.

"Further, we declare that the King of Islam, the Asylum of Mankind, the Commander of the Faithful, Shadow of God in the world, Abul-Fateh Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar, *Padshah-i-Ghazi* (whose kingdom God perpetuate) is a most just and wise king with a knowledge of God.

"Should, therefore, in future, religious questions arise regarding which the opinions of the *Mujtahids* are at variance, and His Majesty,

in his penetrating understanding and clear wisdom, be inclined to adopt, for the benefit of the nation and in the interests of good order, any of the conflicting opinions which exist on that point, and should he issue a decree to that effect, we do hereby agree that such a decree shall be binding on all his people.

"Should His Majesty see fit to issue a new order in conformity with some text of the *Quran*, and calculated to benefit the nation, all shall be bound by it, and opposition to it will involve damnation in the next world, and loss of religious privileges and property in this.

"This document has been written with honest intentions and for the glory of God and the propagation of Islam, and has been signed by us, the principal *Ulema* of the Faith and leading Theologians, in the month of Rajab, A.H. 987 (August-September 1579)."

The above document, which has been miscalled 'Infallibility Decree', gave Akbar the authority to adopt any one of the conflicting opinions of the Muslim jurists, and also that of adopting any line of conduct and policy in non-controversial matters, provided it was in consonance with a verse of the *Quran*. He thus appropriated for himself what had hitherto been the special privilege of the *Ulema*, and more particularly of the Chief *Sadr*. Henceforth he became armed with religious authority over his Muslim subjects. It will not be fair to say that Akbar became pope as well as king, as modern writers like Smith and Woolseley Haig have wrongly affirmed.

Although religious discussions in the *Ibadat Khana* continued, Akbar now arranged for private meetings with scholars and holy men of various faiths. After his loss of faith in *Sunni* orthodoxy he turned to *Shia* scholars. Hakim Abul Fateh, a man of exceedingly winning address from Gilan, acquired a great ascendancy in Akbar's estimation. Mulla Muhammad Yazdi, another *Shia* divine, became his intimate associate and tried to make the emperor a *Shia*. But Akbar found no consolation in the *Shia* faith and turned to *Sufism*. Shaikh Faizi and Mirza Sulaiman of Badakhshan, reputed to be '*Sahib-i-Hal*' initiated him into the mysteries of *Sufi* principles and practices, like direct communion with God. But though Akbar was a mystic by nature and beheld 'visions' more than once, he found *Sufism* too inadequate for his purpose. So he attempted to seek consolation in other religions, freely mixing with Hindu *sannyasis*, Christian missionaries and Zoroastrian priests. So intense was his curiosity to know the truth that he denied himself rest even at bed-time and

held discussions with the Brahmin scholars, Purushottam and Devi, and reputed theologians of other faiths in the balcony of his bedroom during the night. But each of these faiths, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity, failed to appeal exclusively to his expanding soul.

A true rationalist, Akbar carried on his investigation into the truth in a scientific spirit. "Day and night," writes Badayuni, "people did nothing but enquire into and investigate the profound secrets of science, the subtleties of revelation, the curiosities of history and the wonders of Nature.....His Majesty has passed through the various phases and through all sorts of religious practices and sectarian beliefs, and has collected everything which people can find in books, *with a talent for selection and a spirit of enquiry opposed to every (Islamic) principle.*" The result of his lifelong enquiry was the conviction that "there were sensible men in all religions and abstemious thinkers....If some true knowledge was thus everywhere to be found, why should truth be confined to one religion or creed like Islam which was comparatively new and scarcely a thousand years old."*

Akbar's rationalism had long before this time shaken his belief in orthodox Islam. He rejected the Islamic doctrines of Resurrection and Judgment, and brushed aside revelation. He would not believe how anyone could go to Heaven, have a long conversation with God and come back to find his bed still warm. He adopted many Hindu and Parsee beliefs and customs, such as belief in the doctrines of Transmigration of Soul and Sun worship. Thus began his apostacy from Islam. Many a modern historian holds the view that Akbar lived and died a Muslim. The present writer, however, finds himself unable to agree with them. Islam, unlike Hinduism, is a definite creed and one who does not believe in the five fundamentals of that religion, namely, faith in *Kalima* (unity of God and prophetship of Mohammad), five daily prayers, fast of Ramzan, Zakat and Haj, ceases to be a Muslim. The belief in the doctrine of *Karma*, the theory of transmigration of soul and in the worship of the Sun, though conceived only as a source of light, and the conviction that every religion is based on truth, are opposed to the fundamental Islamic axiom that the Muslim religion alone had the monopoly of truth and all that was said and prescribed by former prophets has been cancelled by the latest and greatest of them, namely, Muhammad.

* *Ain*, Vol. I, p. 179.

He looked upon Muhammad as a prophet, not the Prophet. Moreover, we have no contemporary recorded evidence to show that Akbar continued to have faith in the religion of his birth. Botelho and Peruschi who held that view were neither contemporary writers nor even secondary authorities and based their conclusions only on Jesuit writings. Akbar's letter to Abdullah Khan Uzbeg written in 1586 wherein he described himself a Muslim need not be taken seriously. It was sheer diplomatic correspondence and not an honest statement of fact. It was, of course, difficult to repudiate completely all elements of Muslim culture in which he had his birth and early training. Most of these he retained till the end.

Din Ilahi

Dissatisfied with tradition and authority, Akbar prescribed human reason as the sole basis of religion and extended complete religious toleration to every creed in the empire. He was grieved to see narrow-minded religious zealots preaching hatred against one another. In his anxiety to do away with religious discord in the empire he made an attempt to bring about a synthesis of all the various religions known to him, and styled it *Tawahid-i-Ilahi* or Divine Monotheism. It was a socio-religious order or brotherhood, designed to cement diverse communities in the land. It was based on the principle of universal toleration (*Sulah-i-kul*) and comprised good points of all the religions investigated by the emperor himself. It believed in the unity of God and some of the important Hindu, Jain and Parsee doctrines found a prominent place in it.

According to Badayuni and the Jesuit writer Bartoli, Akbar after his return from the Kabul campaign, convened in 1582 a counsel of his principal courtiers and officers and formally promulgated the Din Ilahi. He referred to the discord among the diverse creeds and emphasised the necessity of bringing them all into one "in such fashion that they should be both 'one' and 'all' ; with the great advantage of not losing what is good in any one religion, while gaining whatever is better in another." All the courtiers except Raja Bhagwan Das agreed. Some of the courtiers enrolled themselves as members of the organisation. The order had a ceremonial of its own. When a person desired to be a member, he was introduced by Abul Fazl, who acted as its high priest. Then the man with his turban in hand put his head at the feet of the emperor. The emperor raised him up, placed the turban back on his head and

gave him the *shast* (his own likeness) upon which were engraved God's name and the phrase *Allahu Akbar*. The order had its own salutations, which were *Allahu Akbar* and *Jall-e-Jalal-e-Hu*. The members had to give a dinner in their lifetime as against the old practice of holding a banquet in honour of a dead person. They were required to give a party on the anniversary of their birth and to practise charity. They had to abstain from eating meat as far as possible, and from using the vessels of butchers, fishermen and bird-catchers. They were not to marry old women or minor girls. They were expected to sacrifice property, life, honour and religion in the service of the emperor. These were the four grades of devotion, and one who sacrificed one of these four things was supposed to have possessed one degree of devotion. One who sacrificed two things, possessed two degrees of devotion, and so on.

The order had a few thousand members. But most of the prominent men in the empire did not enrol themselves, and Birbal was the only notable Hindu to accept it. Din Ilahi perished with Akbar's death, though Jahangir continued to make disciples after Akbar's fashion. Both Smith and Woolseley Haig have condemned Akbar for promulgating what they have termed a religion of his own. The former historian went to the length of saying that "the Divine faith was a monument of Akbar's folly, not of his wisdom." The condemnation is unjust. Akbar's highest political object was the fusion of Hinduism and Islam and the establishment of cultural as well as political unity in the empire. The innovation was the outcome of his policy of universal toleration and a brilliant testimony to his national idealism. It was inevitable that a fanatic like Badayuni and ardent Portuguese missionaries who entertained the sure hope of converting Akbar to Christianity but had failed to do so, should have become thoroughly dissatisfied and found fault with the tolerant king. There is little evidence to show that Akbar had recourse to compulsion or bribery to secure adherants to the Din Ilahi. Nor is it fair to hold merely on the testimony of the bigoted Badayuni and the disappointed Jesuit missionaries that Akbar indulged in the persecution of Islam. Akbar, no doubt, fancied himself to be the religious as well as the temporal head of his people. His conception of kingship was patriarchal in character and he considered himself to be the father of his subjects. Naturally, therefore, he arrogated to himself the position of the religious as well as the temporal head of the Indian people.

Akbar and Christianity

A keen student of comparative religions, Akbar sent for Portuguese missionaries from Goa to be able to make a close study of the doctrines of Christianity. In response to his invitation three Christian missions visited his court at different dates and stayed with him long enough to explain to the emperor the principles and practices of their religion. The first mission consisting of Ridolfo Aquaviva, Antonio Monserrate and Enriquez (a converted Persian) reached Fatehpur Sikri on February 19, 1580 and stayed with Akbar till April 1582. The second mission consisting of Edward Leioton and Christopher de Vaga lived at the court from 1591 to 1592. The third mission consisting of Jerome Xavier, Emmanuel Pinheiro and Benedict de Goes reached Lahore, where Akbar happened to have his court in May 1595 and its head remained at the court till after Akbar's death in 1605. As the emperor was desirous of acquiring as complete a knowledge of the principles of Christianity as he could, he not only behaved like an apt pupil but also showed reverence to the images of Jesus, Mary and the Apostles, and often attended the Chapel and other ceremonies held by the Portuguese Fathers. He allowed them to build churches at Agra and Lahore to perform worship openly to celebrate their festivals and even to convert Hindus and Muslims to Christianity. Besides treating the missionaries as first class State guests and giving them every comfort and facility, Akbar bore all their expenses. He allowed his sons to learn the Portuguese language and to acquire a knowledge of Christianity from the missionaries. His conduct and attention made the missionaries think that Akbar was well on the way of becoming a Christian. They sent highly exaggerated and even false reports of their success to their superiors at Goa and Lisbon, to the effect that Akbar had banished Islam from his kingdom, converted mosques into stables, and even prohibited people from being named Muhammad and Ahmad. Not long after, however, they discovered that the emperor had no greater desire to embrace Christianity than Hinduism, Jainism or Zoroastrianism. The disappointed missionaries wrongly attributed it to his vanity and claim to prophetship, and to his inability to abandon his numerous wives and limit himself to only one as enjoined by Christianity. The silly gossip transmitted by the Portuguese fanatics has been credited with truth by many a modern European writer. V. A. Smith and Woolseley Haig presume, without

reason, that Akbar had a better opinion of Christianity than of any other religion examined by him and that his political difficulties prevented him from embracing it. The fact, however, is that a rationalist as he was, Akbar would not believe in a religion that was based on mere revelation and authority.

Akbar and Jainism

Jainism exercised even a more profound influence on the thought and conduct of Akbar than Christianity. He seems to have come into contact with Jain scholars quite early, owing probably to his alliance with the ruling families of Rajasthan, then the home of Jainism, and in 1568 he is said to have arranged a religious disputation between two Jain scholars representing two rival schools of thought. In 1582 he invited one of the greatest living Jain divines, Hiravijaya Suri of Tapa-Gachha, from Gujarat to explain to him the principles of his religion. He was received with all possible honour and so impressed Akbar by his profound learning and ascetic character that the emperor practically gave up meat diet, released many prisoners and prohibited slaughter of animals and birds for many days in the year. Hiravijaya Suri remained at the court for two years, was given the title of *Jagat-Guru*, and was placed by Abul Fazl among the twenty-one top-ranking learned men at Akbar's court, supposed to be acquainted with *the mysteries of both the worlds*. Subsequently several other Jain scholars visited the emperor, prominent among them being Shanti Chandra, Vijaya Sena Suri, Bhanu Chandra Upadhyaya, Harsha-Sar and Jayasoma Upadhyaya. A few Jain teachers of note continued to reside permanently at the court. In 1591 the emperor having heard of the virtues and saintly eminence of Jin Chandra Suri of Khartar-Gachha school invited him to the court. Travelling from Cambay, on foot, like other Jain monks, he reached Lahore in 1591 and was respectively received by the emperor. Like Hiravijaya Suri, he refused to accept costly gifts and presents and explained to Akbar the doctrines of Jainism with so much success that the emperor was highly gratified and conferred upon him the title of *Yuga Pradhan*. Jin Chandra Suri spent the four months of the rainy season at Lahore and in 1592 accompanied Akbar to Kashmir. He left Lahore in 1593. His influence on Akbar proved to be as profound and lasting as that of Hiravijaya Suri.

The teachings of the Jain monks (*Munis*) produced a remarkable change in Akbar's life. He gave up hunting of which he had been

so fond in his early days and abstained almost wholly from meat diet. He restricted the slaughter of animals and birds, prohibiting it completely for more than half the days in the year. He even laid down the penalty of death for taking animal-life on prohibited days. *Farmans* were issued to all governors and local officers to abide strictly by the imperial injunctions.

Akbar and Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism appealed to Akbar even more than Jainism. As early as 1573 he made at Surat his acquaintance with Dastur Mahyarji Rana of Navsari, the greatest Zoroastrian priest of the age. In 1578 he invited him to the court and learnt from him the doctrines and practices of the Parsee religion. Mahyarji Rana took a prominent part in the discussions held at the House of Worship and impressed Akbar so favourably that he adopted some of the practices of the Zoroastrian faith. Dasturji was rewarded by a grant of 200 bighas of land as subsistence allowance with the right to bequeath it to his son. After more than a year's stay at the court the priest returned to Surat (1579). Akbar adopted several practices of the Parsee religion. A sacred fire was prepared according to the Parsee rites and permanently preserved at the palace under the charge of Abul Fazl. The emperor began to show reverence to the sun, light and fire. When lamps were lighted in the evening the whole court was required to rise in reverence. Akbar performed sun worship by prostrating before it. He celebrated Persian festivals and adopted the ancient Persian calendar.

Akbar and Hinduism

Probably Hinduism influenced Akbar much more than any other single religion so meticulously examined by him. It was not necessary to invite missions of Hindu scholars and saints, as he had from the very beginning been in touch with them and was acquainted with many Hindu beliefs and practices. But as Akbar was anxious to acquire a first-hand knowledge of the principles and doctrines of that religion as given in the *Shrutis* and *Smritis*, he associated himself with prominent Hindu scholars, notable among them being Purushottam and Devi. They were drawn to the balcony of the private apartments of the royal palace during the night in order to explain to the emperor the mysteries of Hindu religion. The emperor adopted many Hindu beliefs and practices, such as, the transmigration of Soul and the doctrine of *Karma*. He adopted the Hindu way

of life and began to celebrate many Hindu festivals, such as *Raksha Bandhan*, *Dashahra*, *Dewali* and *Basant*. Sometimes he would put the Hindu paint mark (*tilak*) on his forehead. In conformity with the Hindu practice he began to appear every morning before his subjects at *jharokha darshan* and in many respects began to act like a Hindu king. On his mother's death he shaved himself clean and observed mourning in Hindu fashion. Had the Hindu pandits and princes been broad-minded enough to accept him as a member of our faith and had they made an attempt to rid Hinduism of idolatry and our society of caste system, Akbar would probably have embraced Hinduism. It is a pity that our ancestors of the second half of the 16th century betrayed reluctance to receive even Akbar as a member of their creed. Notwithstanding this prejudice not only the rank and file among the Hindus but even their scholars and chiefs looked upon the great emperor as one of themselves and invented a story to account for his leanings towards Hinduism. The tradition is recorded in the pages of Murtaza Husain Bilgrami's *Hadiaq-tul-Aqalim*, and the present writer heard it also from his father who gave the story in detail. It is related that in his previous life Akbar was a Hindu anchorite, entitled Mukand Brahmachari, who was supposed to have undertaken a religious penance (*tap*) at Prayag so that he might be born a powerful Kshatriya king and exterminate Islam from India. But as luck would have it, he was, owing to a mistake in the performance of the *tap*, born a Muslim. Nevertheless, in view of his pre-natal heritage, Akbar acted like a Hindu monarch that he was so anxious to be, and served the interest of Hindu religion and culture. Many a Hindu would not have his breakfast without having seen the emperor's face (*darshan*) in the morning. Some flattering pandits went further and sought to establish that Akbar was the king of the world and the fountain-head of religion. Akbar repaid the compliment by trying to assimilate Hindu thought and by conforming to the Hindu mode of life.

Akbar not a religious hypocrite

Inspite of his religious vagaries, Akbar was not a hypocrite as has often been represented by disappointed missionaries and fanatics of various creeds. He was undoubtedly a sincere enquirer of truth. The testimony of Badayuni that he spent his morning time in meditation of God at Fatehpur Sikri and that he was a sincere Musalman upto 1578 has already been quoted. Abul Fazl informs us that the

emperor's spacious heart was grieved to see narrow creeds preaching hatred against one another. He would often ask, "Have the religious and worldly tendencies no common ground ?" (*Ain*, Vol. I, p. 162). Akbar, after he had ceased to be a Muslim, performed private devotion four times a day, at sun-rise, noon, sun-set and midnight, spending a considerable time over them. These devotions consisted largely, in his later days, in reverence to the sun, fire and light. Jahangir declares in his autobiography that his father "never for a moment forgot God." (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, p. 27). Besides these formal religious exercises, Akbar's whole life presented a continuous attempt at search after the relations between God and man and many of his Happy Sayings prove beyond the shadow of a doubt his faith in his existence of God and his piety in the correct sense of the term. "There is no need," he observes, "to discuss the point that a vaccum in nature is impossible. God is omnipresent. There exists a bond between the Creator and the creature which is not expressible in language."

"That which is without form cannot be seen whether in sleeping or waking, but it is apprehensible by force of imagination. To behold God in vision is, in fact, to be understood in this sense." (*Ain*, Vol. III, p. 380). Many such quotations can be given, but the above will suffice to show that Akbar was pre-eminently a religious man. Like the great ancient Hindu king, Janak, who had earned the title of Raj Rishi, Akbar always acted on the maxim that one could be truly religious and yet could at the same time discharge his worldly duties with success. He used to say that even when engaged in earthly work, one should have constant thought of God. Such an attitude of mind was not only desirable but also feasible. He used to illustrate his point by giving an example of Indian women who would go out in batches to fetch water from rivers or tanks, place upon their head, one upon the other, two or three pitchers, laugh and joke among themselves, and yet would not allow a drop of water to fall.

Rebellion of Prince Salim, 1599-1604

The later years of Akbar's life were clouded by anxiety caused by the unbecoming conduct and rebellion of his eldest son, his erstwhile darling Shaikho Baba, better known as prince Salim, who succeeded his father as emperor Jahangir. He was the child of many a prayer and was born of the Kachhwaha princess, the daughter of

Bharmal of Amber, at the hermitage of Shaikh Salim Chisti of Fatehpur Sikri, on August 30, 1569. Akbar was so happy that he fulfilled a vow made at his birth by performing a pilgrimage, on foot to the mausoleum of Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chisti of Ajmer. Yet this very child, who was brought up with all possible care and affection, rose into rebellion on attaining maturity and endeavoured to seize the throne from his great father. Contrary to Akbar's desire and hope Salim developed into a head-strong and ease-loving youth. In 1599, while the emperor was preparing for an expedition against Miran Bahadur of Khandesh, Salim was appointed governor of Ajmer and was charged with the task of reducing Rana Amar Singh of Mewar, who in conformity with the heroic tradition of his house, was gallantly waging an unequal struggle in defence of his ancestral dominion. Salim shunned an arduous campaign in the hills and jungles of Mewar and failed to do anything against the Rana. Akbar became angry and began to show preference for his third son Daniyal, the second one, named Murad, having died of *delirium tremens*, on May 12, 1599. Abul Fazl, who disliked Salim's sloth and softness, also exerted his influence against the prince. For these reasons Salim, who was tired of waiting for the throne, grew dissatisfied and decided to raise the standard of rebellion. He seized the immense wealth of Shabaz Khan Kambu, a noble who had died at Ajmer, and hastened towards Agra, en route for Allahabad. Avoiding his grand-mother, who had advanced from Agra to see him and advise him to give up his rebellious intentions, Salim hastily crossed the Yamuna, procceded to Allahabad, and captured the royal treasure from Bihar amounting to Rs. 30 lakhs. He appointed his own officers in the provinces of Allahabad, Awadh and Bihar and began to act like an independent ruler. Akbar, then engaged in the siege of Asirgarh in Khandesh, pretended to disbelieve the news of his son's rebellion and wrote to him to behave. Salim sent an evasive reply, but continued to act as before. Next, the emperor sent Salim's class-mate, Sharif, to Allahabad to advise the prince to give up his evil designs, but the prince won him over and appointed him his minister.

After the fall of Asirgarh Akbar appointed Daniyal, viceroy of the Dakhin, which consisted of the *subas* of Khandesh and Berar and a part of Ahmadnagar, with its capital at Daultabad, and himself set out on his return jounery to Agra to take suitable steps against Salim. He reached the capital on August 23, 1602 and opened

negotiations with his son. But the latter's demands were so extravagant that they could not be complied with. Akbar's policy of mild remonstrance, however, succeeded inasmuch as the rebellious prince, who had advanced with a big force as far as Etawah, returned to Allahabad. He, however, refused to accept the governorship of Bangal and Orissa and struck, it is said, coins in his own name. Akbar now sent for his ablest and best friend Abul Fazl from the Dakhin to consult him regarding the measures to be taken against Salim. The prince, however, had Abul Fazl murdered, as the latter reached the vicinity of Narwar, by a rebellious Bundela chief, Bir Singh Deva of Orchha, on August 19, 1602. Akbar was filled with grief and rage and ordered Bir Singh to be captured and put to death. But the Bundela chief escaped and lived to enjoy the favours of Jahangir. Salima Begum now interceded for the rebel prince and was allowed to visit Allahabad. She succeeded in persuading Salim to proceed to Agra and submit to his father. The prince was conducted by his grand-mother into Akbar's presence. He placed his forehead on his father's feet and with tears in his eyes confessed his guilt and begged for his royal forgiveness. The emperor, who had no choice, pardoned him, raised him up, embraced him and accepted his presents which consisted of 12,000 gold mohurs and 770 elephants. This took place in February 1603. In October Salim was directed to lead an expedition against Mewar. He proceeded as far as Fatehpur Sikri and then requested permission to return to Allahabad in order to bring sufficient artillery for the campaign. Aware of the fact that Salim was averse to undertaking an expedition into Rajputana, Akbar granted his request. At Allahabad the prince became a confirmed drunkard and committed acts of revolting cruelty. Sometime in 1603 his first wife, sister of Man Singh and mother of Khusrav, succumbed to an over-dose of opium taken in consequence of his ill-treatment, which brought about a complete estrangement between him and Man Singh. He flayed alive a news-writer who had reported his misconduct to Akbar. He beat one of his own servants to death and emasculated another belonging to his father. Furiously enraged, Akbar proceeded towards Allahabad to chastise Salim, but had to return, on the first occasion owing to the grounding of his boat, next time owing to excessive rain and finally due to the serious illness of his mother who died on September 10, 1604, aged 77 years. Akbar's third son Daniyal had already died a premature death due to *delirium*

tremens at Burhanpur, in April of the same year (1604). The two bereavements, coming as they did one after another within five months, unnerved the great emperor who must have longed for Salim's return to a sense of duty. The prince visited Agra on November 16 with the double object of offering his condolences to his father on the demise of the latter's youngest son and mother, and of being at hand in case he should collapse on account of the shock of his mother's death. The emperor betrayed no sign of displeasure when the prince paid his respects at the public audience, but afterwards he had him arrested and brought before him in the inner apartment of the palace. Then he rebuked him for his misdeeds, slapped him in the face and imprisoned him in a bathroom under the charge of Raja of Salivahan who was a physician of note, probably because the emperor believed that the prince was suffering from a mental malady and was in need of medical treatment. His principal followers were arrested and imprisoned. After ten days' confinement during which he was deprived of liquor and opium, the prince was released and assigned suitable quarter for his residence. Salim submitted and resigned himself to his father's will, thinking that if he misbehaved the emperor would nominate his son Khusrav as his heir-apparent and deprive him of his birth-right. The fear was not groundless, as he had so much discredited himself that some of the prominent nobles, such as, Man Singh and Khan Azam Mirza Aziz Koka, were openly supporting Khusrav who was then seventeen years of age and quite promising and popular. Salim humbly accepted the governorship of the western provinces, which had for some time been vacant on account of Daniyal's death. But he sent his deputies to conduct the government of the provinces, himself residing at Agra till his father's death.

Death of Akbar, 25-26 October, 1605

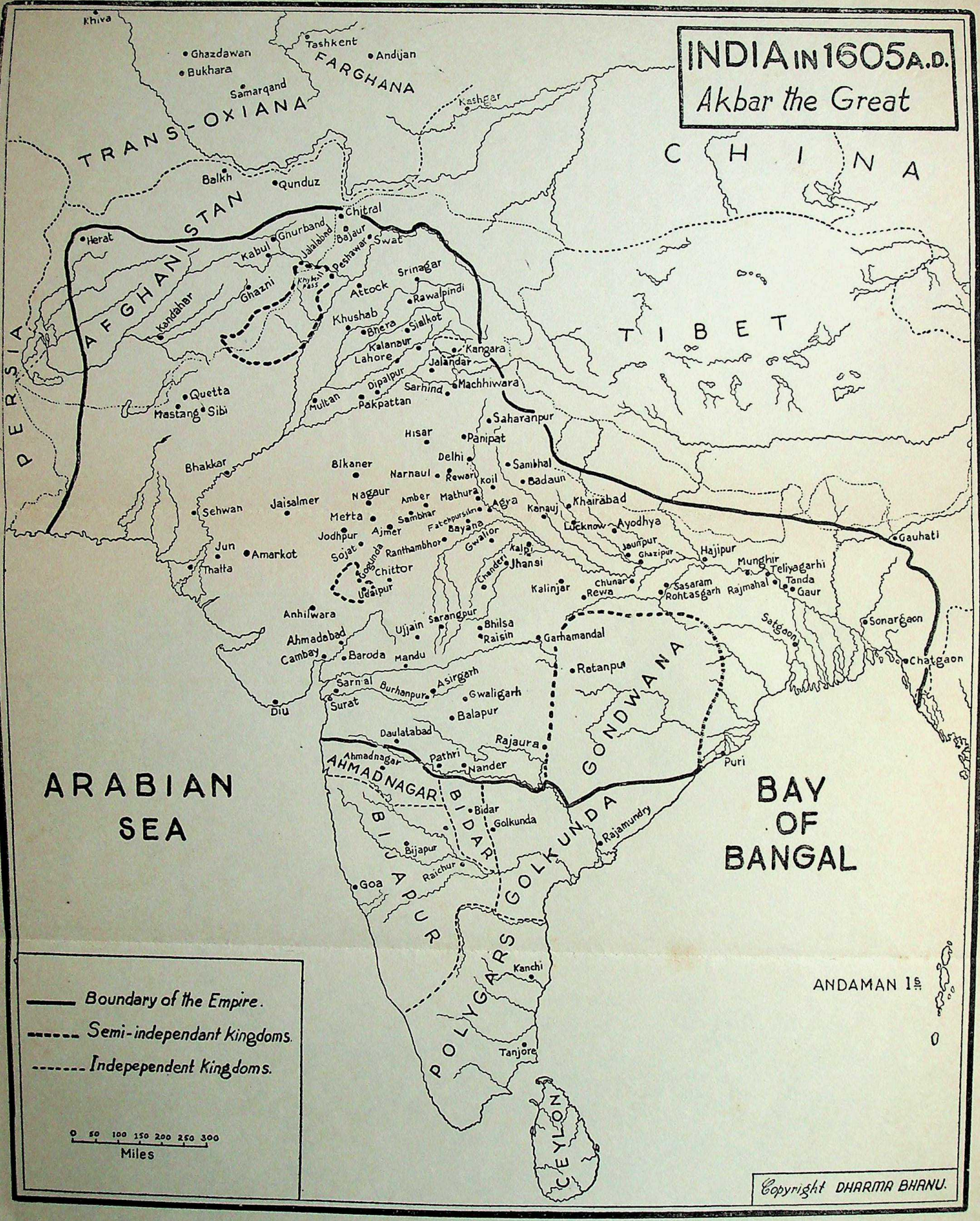
Akbar fell ill on October 3, 1605, his trouble being dysentery or some kind of diarrhoea. His condition grew worse owing to embittered relations between Salim and his son Khusrav and the intrigues of the nobles who became divided into two factions, one supporting Salim and the other Khusrav. It is said that Man Singh and Aziz Koka wanted to arrest prince Salim and to secure the throne for Khusrav. The emperor's physician Hakim Ali failed to diagnose the trouble correctly and for eight days refrained from prescribing any medicine. Then he checked the patient's dysentery

by administering strong astringent. This brought fever and strangury. On October 21 his condition became worse and he nominated Salim as his successor. That day Salim visited him, and, as the emperor could no longer speak, he made a sign to the prince to put on the imperial turban and to grid himself with the sword of Humayun. There was a recurrence of dysentery and Akbar died at midnight of October 25-26, 1605. According to Botelho, he died a Muslim; but there is no authentic evidence to support this view. Akbar was past speech during the last five days of his life and there is nothing on record to show that he recanted what some prejudiced writers have called his 'error'. His funeral was performed in accordance with Muslim rites, and he was buried at Sikandra, five miles from Agra.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Theory of Kingship

Like his religious policy, Akbar's theory of kingship was the result of gradual evolution. During the early years of his reign his conception of his position and duty was that of an orthodox Muslim monarch. He was then the commander of the faithful (*Amir-ul-Mummin*) and defender and missionary of Islam, bound to carry out God's will as expressed in the Quran, and responsible to Him only. Like other Muslim monarchs he was at least in theory subordinate to the wishes of the entire Muslim population (*millat*) in the empire. The public opinion of the Muslim brotherhood or *millat* was guided and controlled by the Muslim learned divines, called the *Ulema*, who consequently claimed the right to influence the State policy, and who weilded great influence. Akbar sought to remove this check to his will and become the supreme authority over his Muslim subjects without being controlled either by the *Ulema* or the *millat*. He attained this object by promulgating, as we have seen, the so-called Infallibility Decree (*Mahzar*) in September 1579. The *Ulema* gave Akbar in writing the authority to accept any of the conflicting interpretations of the law, which in his opinion was likely to be beneficial to the State, and also to adopt any line of action for the benefit of his subjects, provided he could quote in support of such an action a verse from the Quran. This in practice meant uniting ecclesiastical authority with that of secular power in his person. He had felt that the separation of these two authorities had weakened the State. The next logical step was to establish his claim to be an impartial ruler of all his people, Muslims as well as non-Muslims.


INDIA IN 1605 A.D.
Akbar the Great
Khiva
Ghazdawan
Bukhara
Samarqand
Tashkent
Andijan
FARGHANA
TRANS-OXIANA
Kashgar
CHINA
Balkh
Qunduz
Chitral
Herat
Ghurband
Jalalabad
Bajaur
Swat
Kabul
Peshawar
Khyber Pass
Srinagar
Ghazni
Attock
Rawalpindi
Kandahar
AFGHANISTAN
PERSIA
Khushab
Bhera
Sialkot
TIBET
Kalanaur
Lahore
Kangara
Jalandar
Dipalpur
Sarhind
Machhiwara
Quetta
Mastang
Sibi
Multan
Pakpattan
Saharanpur
Hisar
Panipat
Delhi
Bhakkar
Bikaner
Narnaul
Rewari
Koil
Sambhal
Badaun
Nagaur
Amber
Mathura
Agra
Kanauj
Khairabad
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Merta
Sambhar
Fatehpursikri
Bayana
Lucknow
Ayodhya
Jodhpur
Ajmer
Gwalior
Gauhati
Jun
Amarkot
Sojat
Ranthambhor
Kalpi
Jaunpur
Ghazipur
Hajipur
Thalta
Chittor
Jhansi
Munghir
Teliyagarhi
Udaipur
Chander
Kalinjar
Chunar
Tanda
Rewa
Sasaram
Rohtasgarh
Rajmahal
Gaur
Anhilwara
Ujjain
Sarangpur
Bhilsa
Raisin
Satgaon
Sonargaon
Ahmadabad
Cambay
Baroda
Mandu
Garhamandal
Chatgaon
Ratanpur
Sarnal
Burhanpur
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Surat
Diu
Balapur
Daulatabad
Rajaura
Ahmadnagar
Pathri
Nander
Puri
GONDWANA
ARABIAN SEA
AHMADNAGAR
BIDAR
Bidar
Golkunda
BAY OF BANGAL
Bijapur
Rajamundry
BIJAPUR
GOLKUNDA
Raichur
Goa
POLYGARS
Kanchi
ANDAMAN Is.
Tanjore
CEYLON
Boundary of the Empire.
Semi-independant Kingdoms.
Indepependent Kingdoms.
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Miles
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This implied the establishment of a common citizenship on the basis of complete toleration to the non-Muslims and their association in the administration on equal terms with Muslims. Such a policy was sure to bring him into clash with orthodox *Sunni Ulema* and the Muslim nobility who had enjoyed a privileged position in the State. These two classes combined and raised the standard of rebellion. But Akbar with the support of the Rajputs and Persians and the tacit acquiescence of the bulk of the *Sunni* population emerged triumphant from the contest. The episode convinced him that the right course for him was to disregard the narrow basis of Islamic theory of kingship and to build up a new one based on the essential equality and welfare of diverse creeds and communities in the empire. The result of this conviction was the theory of divine right of monarchy so ably propounded by his scholarly secretary, Abul Fazl, who sought to prove that the king was something more than an average human being. He was God's representative on earth and His shadow (*Zill-i-Alhi*) and greater knowledge and wisdom were given to him than to any other human being.

"Kingship is a gift of God," writes Abul Fazl, "and is not bestowed till many thousand grand requisities have been gathered in an individual. Race and wealth and the assembling of a mob are not enough for this great position." (*Akbarnama*, Vol. II, p. 421). Akbar maintained : "The very sight of the kings has been held to be a part of divine worship. They have been styled conventionally as he shadow of God (*Zill-i-Alhi*), and indeed to behold them is a means of calling to mind the Creator." The king, according to Akbar, must be the best well-wisher and guardian of his subjects. He must be just, impartial and benevolent. He should look upon his subjects as his children and work day and night for their welfare. "Divine worship in monarchs," observes Akbar, "consists in their justice and good administration." "Tyranny is unlawful in every one specially in a sovereign who is the guardian of the world." Akbar believed that the king must be absolutely tolerant to every creed and must establish universal peace in his dominion. After enumerating the qualities that an ideal monarch should possess, Abul Fazl concludes : "Inspite of these qualities, he cannot be fit for this lofty office if he does not inaugurate universal peace (toleration). If he does not regard all conditions of humanity and all sects of religion with the single eye for favour and not be mother to some and be

step-mother to others, he will not become fit for the exalted dignity." (*Akbarnama*, Vol. II, p. 421). Akbar expresses the same view in a letter to Shah Abbas of Persia in which he writes that "divine mercy attaches itself to every form of creed and supreme exertions must be made to bring oneself into the vernal flower-garden of 'peace with all' (*Sulah-i-kul*)."

This theory of divine origin of monarchy was accepted by a vast majority of the people. The Hindus accepted it, as it was akin to the ancient Indian ideal of sovereignty, and as they were assured of protection, justice and equality with Muslims. Barring a few religious fanatics, like Badayuni, Muslims also acquiesced in it, though it differed fundamentally from the Muslim theory inasmuch as it rejected the Quranic law as its basis and substituted 'the divine will which manifests itself in the intuition of Kings'. The theory was one of benevolent despotism, and eminently suited the conditions and circumstances of the age.

The Sovereign, his powers and duties

Akbar was an all powerful monarch. In fact he was despot, but enlightened as well as a benevolent despot. He was the head of the State, the supreme commander of the forces, and the chief executive, and possessed the supreme legislative authority. He was also the fountain-head of justice and personally decided cases and settled disputes. He was the guardian and father of his people. Inspite of concentration of such wide powers, Akbar, like ancient Hindu kings, felt it binding to ascertain the wishes of the people, and hardly ever acted against their interests. But this was more or less a matter of personal discretion of the monarch. There was no written constitution to prescribe his duties, lay down his limitations and exercise a check on his despotism. He was not bound to any course of action except by the fear of a rebellion, a popular uprising and the traditional customary laws and precedents.

As the head of the State and government Akbar worked hard to discharge his manifold duties. We get a glimpse of his daily routine in the pages of Abul Fazl's *Akbarnama* from which we learn that he every day appeared three times for state business. Early at sunrise he was ready at *jharokha darshan* to show himself to his subjects. Here he was accessible to the common people and listened to their complaints and transacted state business. Next he held an open court which generally lasted for four and a half hours. "Huge crowds

assembled and there used to be much bustle." (*Badayuni*, Vol. II, pp. 325-326 ; *Akbarnama*, Vol. III, p. 237). People of all descriptions and of both the sexes were allowed to present petitions and to represent their cases in person. The emperor listened to them and decided their cases on the spot. Besides this, he transacted some other business also, such as reviewing the troops of the *mansabdars*. After thus working for four and a half hours the emperor retired. He appeared a second time in the afternoon and held a full durbar in the *Diwan-i-Am*. Here he attended to daily routine business, particularly that relating to the forces, to the workshops (*karkhanas*) and to the appointments and promotions of *mansabdars* and grant of *jagirs*. The meeting usually lasted for a little over an hour and a half. In the evening and often during the night he met his ministers and advisers in the private audience hall (*Diwan-i-Khas*) where special business relating to the foreign relations and internal administration was attended to. Late in the night he held consultation with his ministers on confidential matters of war and foreign policy or matters of the highest moment relating to the internal administration. This meeting was held in a room called *Daulat Khana*, which became known, in the time of Jahangir, *Ghusal Khana*, owing to its proximity to the royal bath-room. "His Majesty is accustomed," writes Abul Fazl, "to spend the hours of night profitably in the private audience hall. Eloquent philosophers and virtuous *sufies* are then admitted. There are also present in these assemblies unprejudiced historians.....On other occasions matters relating to the empire and revenue are brought up, when His Majesty orders for whatever has to be done in each case." Akbar devoted about sixteen hours a day to the business of the State. He was, however, wise enough to delegate much of the work to his ministers and officials, keeping in his hands the initiation of policy and the issuing of instructions and of seeing that they were properly complied with. Besides, he exercised successfully the functions of supervision and control over every department of administration. "A monarch," observes Akbar, "should not himself undertake duties which may be performed by his subjects. The errors of others it is his part to remedy, but his own lapses who may correct."

The Ministers

The central government under Akbar, after it was well organised and evolved, consisted of four departments each presided over

by a minister. The ministers were : (1) Prime Minister (*Vakil*), (2) Finance Minister (*Diwan* or *Wazir*), (3) Pay-Master General (*Mir Bakhshi*), (4) Chief Sadr (*Sadr-us-Sadur*). Early in Akbar's reign ministers were usually appointed by the prime minister and their number was not fixed. On taking the reins of government in his own hands Akbar deprived the prime minister of this privilege. He began appointing and dismissing his ministers as he liked. There was no definite tenure of their office and no definite rule of promotion. Even the prime minister was the king's creature and could be dismissed at royal will. The other ministers were distinctly the prime minister's subordinates. The ministers did not constitute a council and were generally invited separately to discuss matters relating to their departments. Sometime the king took decisions on matters relating to various departments in consultation with the prime minister only. He would even summon high officials other than the ministers to his council. The Mughul ministers did not constitute a cabinet in the modern sense of the term. They were secretaries rather than ministers, as the initiation of policy was in the hands of the emperor and not in those of ministers.

(*a*) ***The Prime Minister*** (*Vakil*). The Prime Minister under Akbar bore the title of Vakil. Sometime he was called *Vakil-i-Mutlaq*. Formerly he was the *de facto* head of all the departments of the central government and had the power to appoint and dismiss other ministers who were looked upon as his subordinates. But after the dismissal of Bairam Khan the Vakil was gradually deprived of these powers. First of all, the department of finance was taken out of his hands and a separate minister called Diwan was appointed to take charge of it. Next, he ceased to have full control over other departments. The Diwan, in course of time, became so important as to eclipse the authority and prestige of the Vakil. During the reign of Shah Jahan the Diwan became the grand wazir or prime minister. The Vakil then ceased to exist. For several years Akbar did not fill the post of Vakil, and he acted as his own prime minister. When the office was revived, the Vakil was not entrusted with a portfolio. The post became ornamental and did not carry with it serious duties except those of an adviser to the emperor or of his viceregent during his illness or absence from the capital.

(*b*) ***The Finance Minister*** (*Diwan* or *Wazir*). The finance minister of Akbar's time was called Diwan or Wazir. The first

finance minister was Muzaffar Khan who presumed to work independently of the emperor and was removed and Raja Todar Mal was appointed in his place. Muzaffar Khan, Todar Mal and Shah Mansur were the three most notable finance ministers and all the three were skilled financiers and first rate administrators.

As the head of the finance department the Diwan was incharge of the revenues and expenditure of the empire. His main duties were to formulate rules and regulations for the land revenue settlement and for fixing the rates of other kinds of revenues, and to scrutinize and control disbursements. Almost all official records were sent to his office for his inspection and storage under his control. He had to scrutinize abstracts of all important transactions and payments. He was required to recommend appointment of provincial diwans and to guide and control them. He was required to affix his seal on all important revenue transactions, including grant of assignments and free grants of land.

The Diwan enjoyed wide powers and discretion. His work was so heavy that assistants had to be appointed to help. One of these was Diwan-i-Khalsa who was incharge of Khalsa (crown or reserved) lands and the other was Diwan-i-Jagirs who was incharge of the lands that were given away in lieu of service (assignment) or as free grants (*sayurghal*). The third was *Sahib-i-Taujih* who was incharge of military accounts. The fourth was Diwan-i-Bayutut whose duty was to supervise the accounts of various *karkhanas* or workshops attached to the court. The treasury, which was in charge of an officer called Mushrif-i-Khazana, was also under the control of the Diwan. All these officers were provided with necessary staff, consisting of accountants, clerks and peons.

As the department of finance was a most important branch of administration, Akbar took personal interest in its organisation and working, and appointed a board consisting of five experts to review its activity from time to time.

(c) ***The Mir Bakhshi or Pay-Master General.*** The word Bakhshi seems to have been derived from the Sanskrit term Bhikshu. The office of Mir Bakhshi corresponded to the Diwan-i-Ariz of the Sultanate period. His rank was next to that of the imperial Diwan. He was required to maintain a register in which were recorded the names, ranks and salaries of the *mansabdars*. The salaries of all the officers were disbursed through his office. All orders of appointment

to *mansabs* of all ranks were passed through his office. As the head of the military department he had to be in touch with every *mansabdar*. He was required to attend the royal durbar and stand on the right side of the throne. It was his duty to present candidates for service in the military department and to present also the soldiers and horses of the *mansabdars* before the king. One of his most important duties was to prepare a list of the guards who had to keep watch round the royal palace. The guards were changed every day and all high *mansabdars* had to perform this duty by turns. The Mir Bakhshi was also required to post news-writers and spies in different provinces and to receive their reports and present them before the king. A special officer was appointed for this work during the time of Akbar's successors. The Mir Bakhshi was not the commander-in-chief of the forces, but he was sometimes required to conduct important military operations. He maintained a big office and was required to issue certificates under his seal and signatures for grants of *mansabs*, sanctions of increments, branding of horses, assignments for guard duty and musters of troops. He had also to divide the army in different sections and to prepare a list of high officials who were required to attend on the king.

As the work of this department increased considerably, more than one Bakhshi was appointed to assist the Mir Bakhshi. They were called Bakhshi No. 1, Bakhshi No. 2 and so on. The Mir Bakhshi divided the work of his office among them. There was a separate Bakhshi for Ahadi troops. There were two other kinds of Bakhshis, known as Bakhshi-i-Huzur and Bakhshi-i-Shagird-pesha.

(*d*) ***The Chief Sadr.*** The Sadr-us-Sadur or the Chief Sadr was a very important minister and was required to discharge three-fold duties, namely, to act as the religious adviser to the emperor, to disburse the royal charity, and to function as the chief justice of the empire. During the early days of Akbar's reign the Chief Sadr enjoyed great power and prestige in all the three capacities. As the chief religious adviser he was required to give authoritative ruling on conflicting interpretations of *shara*, and to enforce it. It was his duty to see that the emperor and his government did not go astray from the injunctions laid down in the Quran and upheld the dignity of Islam. Another equally important duty of the Chief Sadr was to encourage Islamic learning. In order to achieve this object he had to be in intimate touch with the learned Muslim divines and to

encourage them by grant of scholarships (*wazayafs*), subsistence allowances and free grant of lands (*sayurghal*). In all these matters he had a free hand during the early days of Akbar's reign. In his capacity as the chief qazi the sadr was the second highest judicial authority, next only to the emperor, who held court and decided cases, usually the appeals from the chief qazi's court. In this capacity the Chief Sadr recommended candidates for appointment to the posts of provincial, district and city qazis. Like other ministers he had an official establishment with clerks, accountants and peons.

After Akbar had reorganised his administration and rejected the Islamic theory of Government, the Chief Sadr naturally ceased to be his supreme religious adviser. In fact during the later days Akbar did not consult the orthodox Ulema. Under the new dispensation it was not necessary for the Chief Sadr to be the upholder of Islamic law or even himself to be deeply learned in Islamic theology. He was now required to possess absolutely different qualifications, which in the words of Abul Fazl were : "As the circumstances of the men have to be enquired into before grants are made, and their petitions must be considered in fairness, an experienced man of correct intentions is employed for this office. He ought to be at peace with every party and must be kind towards the people at large in words and action. Such an officer is called Sadr." (*Ain*, Vol. I, p. 268). The sadr of Akbar's later days was no longer to encourage only Islamic learning or to patronise only Muslim Ulema. His duty was to disburse the royal charity to the people of all creeds.

Akbar clipped the powers of the Chief Sadr even so far as they related to the grant of scholarships and religious jagirs. He was required to recommend deserving scholars, pious men and indigent people ; but generally the action was taken by the emperor himself. Akbar took personal interest and introduced several important reforms in the department. He laid down elaborate rules for the grant of land and prescribed qualifications of eligibility of holding lands and stipends. He conferred power on other important courtiers to bring deserving cases to his notice. In view of this it was not necessary that petitions for free grant of land should go to the emperor through the Chief Sadr only. An enquiry revealed that there had been great corruption in this department in the early days of his reign and many undeserving persons had been given free grants of land. Akbar ordered the resumption of such lands, and appointed

separate sadrs in the provinces with a view to curtail the powers of the Chief Sadr. After these reforms the department functioned efficiently.*

Besides the four ministers, there was a Mir Saman (Lord High Steward) who wielded great authority and influence. He held the rank of a minister during the days of Jahangir and other Mughul emperors. Abul Fazl makes only a casual reference to this officer and does not describe his duties and powers as those of the ministers. In the time of Akbar he was placed under the diwan or wazir of the empire. Although he was not classed as a minister in the time of Akbar, Mir Saman was an important dignitary and was incharge of the royal household department including the royal harem, kitchen, guards and *karkhanas* (workshops). As such he must have wielded great authority and influence.

Provincial administration

Akbar divided his empire into well defined provinces and established uniform administration in them. In 1602, the provinces numbered fifteen. They were : Allahabad, Agra, Awadh, Ajmer, Ahmadabad, Bihar, Bangal, Delhi, Kabul, Lahore, Multan, Malwa, Berar, Khandesh and Ahmadnagar. Kashmir and Khandhar were districts (sarkars) and were included in the province of Kabul. Sindh, which was then known as Thatta, was a district and was included in the province of Multan. Orissa formed a part of Bangal. The provinces were not of uniform size or income. They were known as subas.

The three provinces of the Dakhin, namely, Khandesh, Berar and Ahmadnagar, were constituted into a single viceroyalty and were placed under Prince Daniyal.

Besides the provinces, there were within the empire many subordinate States which belonged to the chiefs who had accepted Akbar as their suzerain. These States were found in all parts of the empire and their rulers enjoyed varying decrees of power and prestige. They were enrolled as mansabdars in the imperial service and were required to be present at the court on important occasions and rendered military service whenever called. All these States were reckoned as so many districts (sarkars) and were attached to various subas within the boundaries of which they happened to have been situated.

* *Ain*, Vol. I, pp. 268-269.

In each suba there were a governor styled Sipah Salar, a diwan, a bakhshi, a sadr, a qazi, a kotwal, a mir-bahr and a waqaya-navis. Each of these provincial officers had an official establishment of his own which consisted of clerks, accountants and peons.

Sipah Salar (*Governor*). The Sipah Salar was the head of the province and commanded a fairly big force. He was popularly called subahdar and sometimes only 'suba'. He was the viceregent of the emperor and was appointed by him. He was responsible for the welfare of the people of his province and was required to administer even-handed justice. He decided criminal cases. He was to maintain peace and order, and to punish the disaffected and the recalcitrant. He was to appoint reliable and loyal men for police duty and for intelligence service. He was to encourage agriculture and construct works of irrigation, roads, sarais, gardens, hospitals, wells and similar other works. He was to see that the people enjoyed complete religious liberty. As his very name implied, he was a military officer and was required to maintain proper discipline among his troops and to exact obedience from them. He was entrusted with the work of realising the tribute from the vassal states situated within the boundaries of his suba.

The Diwan. The provincial diwan was the next most important officer in the suba. He was appointed on the recommendation of the imperial diwan, was responsible to him and was not subordinate to the governor. He was incharge of the finance department and his duties were to collect revenue, to keep accounts of balances and receipts, to disburse the salaries of provincial officers and to administer civil justice. He was instructed to encourage the growth of agriculture and to keep a strict watch over the treasury. He was also to scrutinize the accounts of the revenue collectors (*amils*) and to see that there were no arrears of revenue. He was required to send regularly periodical reports of the condition of the province to the imperial diwan.

The diwan practically enjoyed the same status, though not the same authority, as the governor, was not responsible to the latter and in financial matters stood at par with him. Thus, there were two parallel and mutually independent authorities in every province—the Sipah Salar and the Diwan. The Sipah Salar was the head of the military, police and executive services, while the Diwan was the head of the civil and revenue branch. Each was required to keep watch

and act as a check over the other. Each had to report to the court about the activities of the other. This was done in order to provide for a check on the ambitious designs of the high provincial officers and to prevent them from oppressing the people. Inspite of the fact that these two officers were rivals, the provincial administration was so organised as to make co-operation and collaboration between them as the essential condition of their success. There was, therefore, in normal times, harmony and co-operation in the provincial administration.

The Sadr and the Qazi. These two offices were generally combined and only one officer was appointed to discharge both the functions. It was the duty of the Sadr to recommend to the imperial sadr deserving persons for the award of cash stipends and free grants of land. The qazi was the head of the judicial department of the province and decided cases. In this capacity he was also required to supervise the work of qazis in the districts and towns.

The Provincial Bakhshi. The provincial Bakhshi was appointed on the recommendation of the Mir Bakhshi and was incharge of recruitment, organization, discipline and efficiency of the provincial army under the command of the Sipah Salar.

Waqaya Navis. Sometimes the provincial bakhshi was required to act as the Waqaya Navis of his suba. Often, however, there was a separate officer to discharge this duty. He had to post news-writers and spies in all important places in the province, including the offices of the sipah salar, diwan, qazi, faujdar, the police officer etc. They were to submit their daily reports to him. He made an abstract of these reports and sent it to the court. As the success of the entire administration depended upon the efficiency of the secret service, great attention was paid to this branch. Sometimes the central government appointed news-writers and spies and sent them to the provinces and the parganas. These were required to act under the orders of the central government.

The Kotwal. The kotwal was incharge of the internal defence, health, sanitation and peace of the provincial capital. He had wide powers, and an office, and many subordinates. He was the supreme administrator of all the *thanas* of the province.

The Mir Bahr. The mir bahr was incharge of the customs and boats and ferry taxes, and port duties in coastal towns.

District administration

The Faujdar. Each province or suba was divided into a number of districts (sarkars). Every district had a faujdar, an amal-guzar, a qazi, a kotwal, a bitikchi and a khazandar. The head of the district was faujdar, who, as his title shows, was a military officer. He had three duties to discharge. The first was to maintain peace and tranquillity in his jurisdiction, to keep the roads free from robbers and thieves, and to enforce imperial regulations. Secondly, being a military officer, he was incharge of a small force or local militia. It was his duty to keep this army well equipped and in readiness for service. Thirdly, he was required to assist the collector (amal-guzar) in the work of revenue collection. As the efficiency of the district administration depended upon the vigilence and personal character of the faujdar, Akbar devised means to keep an eye on him and other local officers. The central government kept itself in touch with the faujdar by sending high officials to inspect his work. The reports of the spies and news-writers also kept the central government informed of the activities of the district and pargana officers. Immediate action was taken if it was found that they were amiss in their duties or were oppressing the people.

The Amal-Guzar. The next important district officer was amal-guzar or revenue collector who was assisted by a large staff. Besides being the collector of revenue, he was also required to punish robbers and other miscreants in order to protect the peasantry. He was authorised to advance loans (taqavi) to the latter and to recover them gradually. He was also instructed to allow to the cultivators the concession of half a biswa on each bigha at the time of revenue collection and to redress their grievances. He was to supervise the work of the treasurer of his district and to send monthly reports of receipts and expenditure to the court and remit regularly the revenue of the district to the royal treasury.

The Bitikchi. Among the several assistants of the amal-guzar the Bitikchi occupied an important place. In fact, as far as revenue affairs were concerned, his rank was next to that of the amal-guzar. Although he was officially styled as a writer,* his duty was to prepare necessary papers and records regarding the nature of the land and its produce and it was on the basis of these records that the assessment was made by the amal-guzar. The bitikchi was required to obtain

* Bitikchi is a Turkish word meaning writer.

from the qanungos the statement of the average revenue of each village which was calculated on the basis of last ten years' produce. He was required to have a knowledge of the peculiar customs and land tenures obtaining in his district. He was to record the area of arable and waste lands of each village, to define the boundaries of the villages and to enter in his records the contracts made with the cultivators. "He shall note the name of the munsif, the superintendent, the land surveyor and the thanadar and also those of the cultivators and the headman and record below the kind of produce cultivated." He was to grant a receipt to the cultivator paying revenue into the treasury, scrutinize the records of the patwari and the headman, keep daily and monthly accounts of income and expenditure and forward monthly abstracts of the same to the court.

The Khazandar (*Treasurer*). The next officer attached to the collector in every district was the khazandar (treasurer). His main duties were to receive the revenue, to keep it and to forward it to the central treasury. He was instructed to accept coins of former reigns as bullion and not to harass the paying cultivators. He was to deposit the money safely into the treasury and to deliver one key to the collector and to keep the other with himself. He was not authorised to make any disbursements. Detailed instructions as to how the revenue from the district should be sent to the central treasury were laid down and were required to be scrupulously followed.

The Pargana

The Shiqdar. Each sarkar was divided into a number of parganas or mahals. The pargana was the lowest fiscal and administrative unit of administration. There were four principal officers in every pargana. They were : the shiqdar, the amil, the fotadar and the karkuns. Besides, there were, as in the time of Sher Shah, two other semi-official functionaries, such as, the qanungo and the chaudhari. It seems that the functions and duties of the shiqdar remained the same as were in the time of Sher Shah. He was the executive officer of the pargana and was responsible for its general administration. Besides maintaining peace and order in the pargana, he had to receive the money when the cultivators brought it to pay in the pargana treasury, and to supervise and control the treasury staff. He used to administer criminal justice ; but his powers as a

magistrate were limited. It was his duty to forward such cases as did not fall within his cognizance to the kotwal of the sarkar.

The Amil. The amil (sometimes called Munsif) had to discharge the same duties in the pargana as the amal-guzar in the sarkar. His main work was that of assessment and collection of land revenue. He was required to deal directly with the peasantry and not through the headmen of the villages. Besides, he assisted the shiqdar in the maintenance of law and order and punishment of miscreants. He was instructed to seek the assistance of shiqdar in the work of the collection of revenue. Probably he also dispensed civil justice.

The Fotadar. The fotadar was the treasurer of the pargana and had to discharge the same duties as the khazandar of the district. The karkuns were the writers and kept records of the arable land, the kinds of crops raised, the revenue payable from individual cultivator, and the actual collections and arrears, if any. Probably the records were kept in Persian during the later days of Akbar's reign.

The Qanungo. The qanungo was the head of the patwaris in the pargana and kept the records of the crops, the revenue demands, actual payments, arrears etc., of the entire pargana as the patwari was required to do for the village. He was a repository of the knowledge of various kinds of land tenures and other peculiarities relating to the nature of the soil, assessment and collection of revenue. He was, therefore, called by Abul Fazl, "the refuge of the husbandman". He was formerly paid a commission of one per cent on the revenue of the pargana ; but Akbar substituted cash salary from the treasury in place of the commission, and granted him an assignment of land for his personal maintenance.

Sea-ports and Frontier Outposts

In addition to the parganas there were some other political and administrative divisions in certain localities. These were sea-ports, frontier outposts or frontier forts and thanas. The Mughuls had no navy ; but as their eastern and western frontiers touched the seas, they had a large number of sea-ports in their possession. The sea-ports were valuable owing to a large volume of trade that passed through them and also because those on the west coast were the places at which the Haj pilgrims embarked on their voyage for Arabia. Consequently, they were treated as administrative units. It

is true that nominally they were attached as sub-divisions of a suba but in actual practice the officers appointed to keep watch over them acted under the orders of the central government. There was an officer in charge of the port. Sometimes more than one port was placed under the charge of one officer. In big ports, like Surat or Cambay, there were a faujdar, a qazi, a muhtasib, a darogha of the mint, a mutsaddi, a treasury officer, an accountant and a few karkuns. Surat was classed as a sarkar and comprised several parganas. It had a fairly strong force to guard it. Similarly, frontier outposts were garrisoned with troops and were administered as separate units. The ports as well as frontier outposts were particularly important for the lucrative trade that passed through them. In each of these places there was a customs house with a superintendent as its head and a large staff of clerks, peons, waiters and porters to collect the customs dues from the merchants.

Municipal administration

The *Ain Akbari* gives a picture of the municipal administration during the reign of Akbar. Over every town of considerable importance a kotwal was appointed to take charge of what are, in modern terminology, called municipal duties, besides police work. In small towns, where there was no kotwal, these duties devolved upon the amal-guzar of the district, who appointed suitable officers to discharge municipal and police duties under his supervision. (*Ain*, Vol. II, p. 47). The kotwal was appointed by the central government and was the head of a small force adequate for maintaining order in the city. He was empowered to appoint city guards who were allotted separate parts of the city for watch during day and night. The kotwal was instructed to divide the municipal area into quarters or wards, each of which was put in charge of a subordinate officer appointed by the kotwal himself. In every city the artisans grouped themselves under various guilds, like the merchants guilds and the craftsmen guilds of medieval Europe. The kotwal usually recognised the guild master and sometimes he nominated one. There was also a broker through whom business was conducted. As the names of the various lanes in the old cities indicate, people following the same profession resided in the same lane. It was the kotwal's duty to keep himself in touch with the people and to have information about the condition of every family. He was required to know the coming and departure of guests of every household. "He was to keep a

register of every house and frequented road, and engage the citizens in a pledge of reciprocal assistance, and bind them to a common participation of weal and woe." (*Ain*, Vol. II, p. 41). The kotwal was to look after the sanitation of the town and keep the public thoroughfare free from obstruction and nuisance. It was his duty to force the idle and the vagabond to some sort of work.

We have ample information about the powers and functions of the kotwal. His powers were large and responsibilities very heavy. His duties may be classified as follows :

1. Watch and ward of the city.
2. Control of the market.
3. Proper care and disposal of heirless property.
4. Prevention of crimes.
5. Enforcement of Akbar's social reforms.
6. Control of slaughter houses and cemeteries.

"He was either to discover the thieves and the stolen goods or himself make good the loss." He controlled prices, inspected markets and weights and measures. If any citizen or merchant from outside died without leaving heirs, the kotwal was to take an inventory of his belongings and make arrangements for the safety of his property and to deliver it to the legitimate heirs. He was to see that the security of life, liberty and property were guaranteed to the people, and he was enjoined not to violate on any account the privacy of domestic life. He was also required to supervise the slaughter houses, which were erected outside the city, and not to allow any animal to be killed on certain fixed days of the year. He had to see that butchers, hunters of animals and washers of the dead were segregated in a particular part of the city and were prevented from mixing with other people. "He was required to look after the housing and comforts of the foreigners, who were lodged in a separate sarai and whose actions and movements, going and coming were carefully watched."

Akbar organised the city administration on ancient Hindu model. The city became the seed-pot of his social and humanitarian activity. The kotwal was required to enforce the imperial regulations regarding the prohibition of the *sati*, forcible conversion to Islam, performance of circumcision under the age of twelve, child marriage, infanticide and immorality. Women of ill fame were segregated and compelled to live outside the city. It was the kotwal's

duty to keep a list of such women and watch all those people who visited them.

The kotwal's duties being very heavy he was empowered to employ requisite number of assistants, such as police officers, spies, clerks and peons. The uniforms of the kotwal and the city police were of red colour.

Village Communities

The most important constitutional contribution of our race was in the field of rural administration. Since time immemorial there have existed in India well organised village communities fittingly styled village commonwealths, which constituted brotherhoods and managed their affairs on democratic lines. The village communities existed as autonomous units throughout the medieval period. The Sultans of Delhi did not find it profitable and practicable to interfere with them and, therefore, left them alone and allowed them to lead their own life. Sher Shah kept touch with village communities through the semi-official functionaries, namely, the headmen, the patwaries and the chaukidars. Akbar went a step further. He recognised the village panchayat as a legally established court of justice and upheld its decisions. He brought the patwari and the chaukidar into intimate touch with the pargana government. Although he did not interfere with village life and administration, he added to its prestige by according recognition to its activities.

Contemporary authorities do not furnish us any material on the basis of which it might be possible to construct a complete picture of the village administration during the reign of Akbar. Even Abul Fazl makes only casual references to village life. But as the village commonwealth functioned satisfactorily till after the middle of the nineteenth century A.D. and in some cases it does even now, it may be presumed that the village government not only existed throughout the ancient and medieval times but also made a substantial contribution to the administration, stability and well-being of our people. Every village constituted a village community. It had a council consisting of heads of the families inhabiting it. The council was responsible for the village administration, such as, watch and ward, sanitation, elementary education, irrigation, medical relief, public works, moral and religious welfare of the people, and the dispensation of justice. It also made arrangements for recreation,

amusements and celebration of festivals. There was a panchayat for trying cases. We have it on the testimony of an inscription of the early tenth century A.D. that the village council or panchayat was divided into six sub-committees, each of which was entrusted with separate duties. (*Village Government in British India* by John Mathai, pp. 25-26). The sub-committees were :

1. Annual committee.
2. Garden committee.
3. Tank committee.
4. Gold committee.
5. Committee of justice.
6. Panchvara committee.

The members of the sub-committees were chosen by some sort of election, and often, it may be presumed, unanimously. Besides, there were caste panchayats to decide caste and family disputes. In every village there were one or two watchmen, a priest, a school master, an astrologer, a carpenter, a blacksmith, a potter, a washerman, a barber, a physician and a patwari or an accountant. These were reckoned as village functionaries. They carried on village administration in the spirit of mutual co-operation.

The village was a self-sufficient commonwealth and its members stood together in weal and woe. The existence of village communities was responsible for the preservation of our society and culture through the ages.

The Army : The *mansabdari* system

During the early years of his regin, Akbar's army was mostly foreign in personnel consisting, as it did, of Mongols, Turks, Uzbegs, Persians and Afghans who had followed Babur and Humayun as their regular troops or camp-followers. The commanding officers were of the same race as the troops and were granted large assignments of land in lieu of their salaries. In view of Humayun's deficiency as a leader of men and the semi-independent position of the commanders, the military aristocracy was inclined to be insubordinate, making the Mughul army a weak instrument of force. The officers did not maintain the number of troops which they were required to have. They resorted to irregularities and fraudulent practices and cheated the government and the soldiers alike. They attempted to resist every reform and tried to prevent Akbar from centralising the authority and making the army a unitary organisa-

tion. During his early days, Akbar had to face numerous rebellions on the part of his Mughul and Uzbeg officers. He was forced to the conclusion that there was no other way of establishing his authority except by taking the absolute power of direction and control in his own hands, reducing the insubordinate military officers and reorganising the army in such a manner as to stamp out corruption and to convert it into a powerful disciplined force. The result was the *mansabdari* system.

The word *mansab* means place or rank, and *mansabdars* were, therefore, holders of ranks in the imperial service. The lowest rank was that of ten and the highest that of ten thousands. Towards the end of his reign, Akbar raised the highest rank to twelve thousands. (*Badayuni*, Vol. II, p. 342). At the time of the establishment of the *mansabdari* system the ranks above five thousands were reserved for the imperial princes, that is, the emperor's sons and grandsons ; but subsequently Raja Man Singh, Mirza Aziz Koka and one or two other top-ranking officials were promoted to the rank of 7,000. Thereafter, the *mansabs* of 8,000 and above were meant for the members of the royal family. In the beginning Akbar had established only one class or grade for each *mansab*. But towards the end of his reign, he introduced three grades in each of the *mansabs* from 5,000 downwards by instituting what is known as the *sawar* rank. Thus many *mansabdars* held a double rank, i.e., both *zat* and *sawar* ranks. The *mansabdars* were not required to maintain the full number of troops indicated by their ranks or *mansabs*. For example, a *mansabdar* of 1,000 was not required to have 1,000 troops under his command. It is consequently wrong to call a *mansabdar* of 1,000 as the commander of 1,000, as has been done by some historians, including Blochmann, W. Irvine, V. A. Smith, and others. The *mansabdars*, no doubt, were required to maintain a certain number of troops in their employ ; but it was only a fraction of their ranks. The *mansabs* were a convenient method of fixing the status and salaries of the imperial officers. It was not necessary that a *mansabdar* of high rank should be employed on a correspondingly high post in the service. Raja Man Singh enjoyed the rank of 7,000, but he was never employed a minister at the court. The ministers held *mansabs* inferior to that of Man Singh. Similarly, Abul Fazl held much smaller a *mansab* or rank than that of many members of the imperial service, and yet he enjoyed a higher post than those who were superior to him in rank

and salary. Nor was it necessary that a *mansabdar* must be employed on a regular post or duty. Some *mansabdars* had no duty except that of waiting on the emperor and performing the work which they might be called upon to do from time to time. The services were not classified into civil service and military service, and any *mansabdar* was liable to be called upon to discharge either duty at any time in his career. All imperial officers, except perhaps the *qazis* and the sadrs, were enrolled as members of the *mansabdari* system and were required to maintain some troops proportionate to their ranks. All the vassal chiefs, who were rulers of semi-independent states, were also enlisted as *mansabdars* and were required, like other *mansabdars*, to maintain regular troops under their command and to bring them for muster or review at stated intervals. There were no fixed rules of appointment, promotion or dismissal of the *mansabdars* who held offices at the pleasure of the sovereign and were promoted, degraded or dismissed at his will. The usual practice, however, was that when a *mansabdar* did well at muster and brought the requisite number of troops, who were found smart and well disciplined, he was promoted to the next higher *mansab*. Sometimes an exceptionally competent *mansabdar*, who pleased the emperor by loyal and devoted service, was given an abnormally high lift. It was not necessary for a *mansabdar* to pass through various grades in order to reach a high *mansab*. The *mansabdars* were paid high salaries in cash and sometimes by assignments of land expected to yield the revenue corresponding to the salaries fixed for particular *mansabs*. Akbar, however, preferred payment in cash to that by grant of land. Even when a *mansabdar* was paid by assignment of land, he was not allowed to retain it for a long time, and his assignment was transferred from province to province. After the institution of the *mansabdari* system, the assessment and collection of land revenue in the assigned areas, too, were done by the officers of the revenue department, and not by the agents of the assignees who had no power to increase the fixed demand or realise from the cultivator anything in excess of the fixed revenue. It has been supposed by some writers, notably Irvine, Smith and Moreland, that the *mansabdars* were not paid for all the twelve months of the year, but for seven to nine months, and sometime only for four months. This is not borne out by contemporary authorities which clearly state that the *mansabdars* were paid salaries for the full year. The misunderstanding seems to have been

caused by the fact that the government deducted the money on account of loans and cost of equipment supplied from the salary of the *mansabdars* concerned and 5 p.c. of the salary of every trooper under a *mansabdar* on account of the trooper's equipment.

Mansabdars were allowed to recruit their own troops who generally belonged to his own race or tribe. Most of the *mansabdars* were foreign Turks, Persians and Afghans and indigenous Rajputs. There were some Arabs and men of other foreign nationalities also. The number of Indian Muslims holding high ranks was small. The *mansabdars* were required to purchase their own horses and equipment; but sometimes these were supplied by the government. At the time of enlistment and first muster the descriptive roll of the troops and of horses under a *mansabdar* were recorded and the horses branded. Each horse bore two marks, the government mark on the right thigh and the *mansabdar's* mark on the left thigh. Every *mansabdar* had to undergo periodical musters, which occurred sometimes once a year and sometimes every three years, when troops had to be presented and inspected. Each *mansabdar* had a fixed rate of pay out of which he had to defray the cost of his establishment and the salary of his troops. His salary, even after deducting the cost of establishment, was very handsome, as the following table given by Moreland will show :

Rank	Monthly Salary in Rupees			Cost of appropriate force
	1st Class	2nd Class	3rd Class	
5,000	30,000	29,000	28,000	10,600
3,000	17,000	16,800	16,700	6,700
1,000	8,200	8,100	8,000	3,000
500	2,500	2,300	2,100	1,170
50	250	240	230	185
10	100	82½	75	44

Zat and *Sawar*

Scholars hold divergent opinions about the significance of *zat* and *sawar*. According to Blochmann, *zat* indicated the number of troops which a *mansabdar* was expected to maintain, while *sawar* meant the actual number of horsemen that he maintained. On the

other hand, Irvine holds that the *zat* indicated the actual number of cavalry, while *sawar* was an honour and represented like the *zat*, the actual number indicated by it. According to Dr. R. P. Tripathi, the *sawar* rank implied an additional honour but no obligation on the part of the *mansabdar* to maintain the number of horsemen indicated by it. He was, however, paid an extra allowance for the *sawar* rank. Mr. Abdul Aziz is of the opinion that the *zat* rank imposed an obligation to maintain a fixed number of elephants, horses, beasts of burden and carts, but no horsemen or cavalry, whereas *sawar* represented the actual number of cavalry under a *mansabdar*. Blochmann's interpretation seems to approximate to the actual state of affairs as it existed after the institution of the *sawar* rank. It appears that for several years after the establishment of the *mansabdari* system *mansabdars* of various ranks failed to maintain and bring to muster the numbers of cavalry fixed for their several ranks. Moreover, the lumping together of horses, horsemen (cavalry), elephants, camels and oxen, etc., in each rank caused confusion. It was probably to put an end to this confusion and to secure an absolute compliance of the number of horsemen fixed for each rank that Akbar instituted the *sawar* rank, as distinct from the *zat* rank. Thereafter the *zat* rank indicated the number of horses, elephants, beasts of burden and carts required to be maintained, but not horsemen or cavalry. The *zat* rank was not personal rank, as has been wrongly supposed by modern scholars. The *sawar* rank, on the other hand, indicated the actual number of horsemen to be maintained by a *mansabdar* in Akbar's reign. Under his successors this regulation became a little lax, and the number of horsemen fell below the *sawar* rank.

The Three Grades

It has been pointed out that every *mansab* of 5,000 and below comprised three grades, namely, first grade, second grade and third grade. A *mansabdar* belonged to the first grade of a particular rank, if his *sawar* rank was the same as his *zat* rank. If, on the other hand, his *sawar* rank was less than *zat* rank but did not fall below half that of the latter, he belonged to the second grade in that rank. But, if his *sawar* rank was less than half of his *zat* rank or he had no *sawar* rank at all, he belonged to the third grade in that rank. For example, a *mansabdar* of 5,000 *zat* belonged to the first grade in the rank of 5,000, if his *sawar* rank was also 5,000. He belonged to the

second grade, if his *zat* rank was 5,000 and *sawar* rank 2,500. And if his *zat* rank was 5,000 and *sawar* rank less than 2,500, he belonged to the third grade. This rule was applicable for all *mansabs*. A further complication was introduced by the institution of what are known as *du aspa* and *sih aspa*. But we are not concerned with them here, as these additions were made in the time of Akbar's successors.

Some *mansabdars* commanded troops that were recruited directly by the state and not by the *mansabdars* concerned. Such troops were called *dakhili* or supplementary troops. There were *dakhili* cavalry and *dakhili* infantry. Besides, there were gentlemen troopers called *ahadis*. They were recruited individually and were under the command of a separate *mansabdar* or officer, and had a *diwan* and a *bakhshi* of their own. *Ahadis* were considered very efficient and loyal troops, and were paid high salaries : sometimes each *ahadi* trooper at Rs. 500/- per month.

The Mughul army comprised cavalry, infantry, artillery and elephantry, but no navy. Cavalry was by far the most important branch and was regarded the 'flower of the army.' It was drawn mostly from the *mansabdars* and the *ahadis*. The infantry was not of much consequence. It consisted of matchlockmen, archers, Mewatis, swordsmen, wrestlers, mace-bearers, porters and *chelas* (slaves). The matchlockmen or *bandukchis* formed the most important branch of infantry. We know from the *Ain Akbari* that the total number of matchlockmen under Akbar was 12,000. The Mewatis numbered a few thousands and were noted for their qualities as soldiers and skill as detectives. They were mostly employed as dispatch runners. There were one lakh of swordsmen of which 1,000 were kept in readiness for service at court. They were noted for their bravery, ability and swordsmanship. Porters and mace-bearers were also classed as soldiers. Artillery was not a very efficient branch, inspite of the fact that there were large pieces of ordnance, which were carried by many elephants and thousands of bullocks. There were many kinds of guns. There was an officer in charge of this branch of the army, known as *Mir Atish*. Besides, there were war elephants who were used in various ways. They carried baggage. At the time of battle they were furnished with defensive armours and offensive weapons. They caught hold of enemy soldiers, dashed them against the ground and trampled them under foot. They carried guns on their backs which were ignited and fired in battles.

Such guns were called *gajnals*. A *gajnal* elephant carried two soldiers and two pieces of ordnance.

According to Blochmann, Akbar's standing army, equipped and maintained from the imperial treasury, was not more than 25,000. Later investigations have shown that these figures are much too low. We know that the standing army maintained by Jahangir and Shah Jahan was not less than three lakhs strong. The numerical strength of Akbar's standing army could not have been less than three hundred thousands. In these figures should be included the contingents of *mansabdars* as well as the army directly attached to the emperor. The infantry which was much larger is exclusive of these figures.

Akbar bestowed a great deal of thought and attention on his military establishment and laid down minute rules and regulations regarding its organisation, equipment and discipline. A separate department of branding (*Dagh Mahali*) was established under an officer, assisted by several clerks. Every care was taken to see that the regulations were faithfully observed and the discipline of the army was not impaired. Being an unfailing judge of human character, the emperor almost invariably appointed brave and competent *mansabdars*. He unerringly laid his finger on the weak points in his military department and removed its deficiencies without loss of time. He succeeded in making the system work so efficiently that he earned the credit of having a lifetime's unbroken record of victories in the field of battle.

The system was, however, inherently weak. Contemporary writers, specially Badayuni, have given graphic details how during the first half of Akbar's reign *mansabdars* cheated the government by bringing to muster men from the streets in military uniform and passing them off as soldiers. It was by no means rare for troopers to substitute indifferent horses for good ones supplied to them by the military department. It took Akbar many years indeed to stamp out corruption. After 1581 we do not hear of many cases of proxies of men or horses at musters or misappropriation of soldiers' salaries by their *mansabdars*. But this was because of Akbar's uncommon ability as a leader and administrator and vigilance and discipline. Individual troops under the system were more loyal to their chiefs than to the emperor. The division of the army was *mansabdarwise* and a *mansabdar* commanded the same troops throughout his life.

There were no transfers of officers from regiment to regiment. Secondly, within a *mansabdar's* division there was no classification of troops into regiments. All the troops were immediately under him and every soldier had personal relations with him. Nor was the numerical strength of each arm regulated and fixed in a *mansabdar's* contingent. Thirdly, corruption in some form or other was unavoidable in a system which left the duties of recruitment and administration of the army to the *mansabdars*, that is, the commanding officers themselves. Fourthly, the practice of payment through the *mansabdars* was pernicious and led to abuses. Fifthly, the *mansabdari* system had no organic centre and lacked the cohesive force which must always be essential in a national army. Sixthly, the standard of efficiency varied from unit to unit under various *mansabdars* and there was no uniformity of weapon, equipment, or discipline. Seventhly, the pomp and display which had become natural with the *mansabdar* acted as an obstacle to military efficiency. Although Akbar sometimes brushed aside all pomp and display in times of emergency, under normal circumstances his army was encumbered with numerous attendants, dancing girls, elephants, camels, bands, offices, workshops and bazars. Eighthly, artillery was the weakest branch of the army and inspite of much show of big cannon, *rakhlas* and *gajnals*, it proved ineffective against a fort like Asirgarh. Finally Akbar's army consisting, as it did, of officers and troops of several nationalities, over two-third of whom were foreigners, was not a national army, and was not bound by common interests and common sentiment of love of the country. On account of these inherent weaknesses the Mughul army considerably deteriorated under Akbar's successors.

Inspite of so many defects the *mansabdari* system was an improvement upon the military establishment of the medieval period. It was a sort of compromise between tribal chieftainship and the feudal system of levying troops. It combined the advantages of both the systems. Moreover, it was designed to tap every source of fighting strength in the country. Various units were particularly suited to certain special kinds of military duties. For example, certain Rajput *mansabdars* were diplomatically used against certain other Rajput chiefs with whom they were at feud. The system assured steady loyalty of the *mansabdars* to the emperor and offered an incentive for individual distinction. Every *mansabdar* was aware that his promotion or degradation depended upon his loyalty and

quality of his service. Through them was ensured the loyalty of the important military and political sections of the population of the country.

Finance

Although the modern science of Public Finance had not yet come into existence, Akbar's financial policy was highly developed and much in advance of the age. The emperor was conversant with the implications of the problem and was assisted by competent financiers, like Raja Todar Mal, Muzaffar Khan, and others who were well acquainted with the main problem of reconciling the interests of the people and the needs of the government, and of advancing the well-being of both. But Akbar's financial system, as it came to exist during the later years of his reign, was not established without considerable effort and experimentation. In fact, he devoted years of sustained labour and thought before he could place the finances of his empire on sound scientific foundation.

Akbar did not believe in the Islamic theory of taxation, which recognised only four sources of revenue, namely, *kharaj*, *khams*, *zakat* and *jizya*, the last two being religious taxes. On the contrary, his theory of taxation has akin to that of the ancient Hindus and seems to have been derived from our ancient literature. In describing the theory Abul Fazl says that the existence of a just monarch is essential for the protection of life, honour, property and liberty of the people, and the former has, therefore, to be paid for his services to the public. As the quality and nature of the soil differ in various countries, "the administration of each state must take these circumstances into consideration and fix its demand accordingly." (*Ain*, Vol. II, p. 55).

The fiscal sources of the empire were divided into two main divisions—central and local. The central revenue was derived from Commerce, Mint, Presents, Inheritance, Salt, Customs and Land. Of these the land revenue was the most lucrative and important. Quite early in his reign Akbar had abolished the religious taxes charged from the Hindus, such as, the pilgrims' tax and the *jizya*, which were realised with punctilious care by all his Muslim predecessors. *Zakat*, which was of two kinds, namely, first a religious tax from the Muslims to be spent for religious and charitable welfare of the Muslims only, and second on cattle and some other articles, lapsed gradually. This was natural in a state in which secular

element predominated over the religious. The state not only derived revenue from commerce but also sometimes participated in it. All kinds of ammunition, particularly lead and salt petre, were state monopolies. There were attached to the imperial household department many workshops, which, though not primarily meant for revenue, brought much income to the exchequer. Mints for the issue of various kinds of coins were established in several towns; those too constituted a source of revenue. The emperor used to receive costly presents from officials, nobles, vassals and foreign visitors. He invariably gave something in return but it was slight as compared to the value of the presents. The royal treasury thus acquired lakhs of rupees every year. All unclaimed and heirless property also passed to the state. The emperor, however, did not escheat the property of nobles or officials on their death, as has been erroneously supposed by European travellers and writers. A salt duty was levied. Customs duties ranged from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 per cent. Ports brought in a lot of revenue from this source. Local revenues came from octroi duties, ferry and road taxes, and from several *abwabs* (cesses).

The revenue from all the above sources amounted only to a small fraction of the income from land, which, according to the calculations of W. H. Moreland, was, during the later years of Akbar's reign, ninety millions of rupees. The land revenue was charged on the basis of the government records which were prepared after ascertaining the average produce of various kinds of lands for ten years. The system was the result of a series of experiments undertaken during the early years of Akbar's reign. On taking over the administration from the hands of Bairam Khan in 1560, Akbar found his small kingdom parcelled among his officials and soldiers, leaving for the crown a comparatively small portion known as the *khalsa* or the crown or the reserved land. As it was in the interest of the administration to satisfy jagirdars, the revenue figures were magnified, i.e., the revenue of the jagirs and consequently of the whole empire was shown larger than what it really was. There was hardly any money in the treasury. On one occasion it failed to produce Rs. 15/- that Akbar needed for some urgent business. The incident compelled him to pay an immediate attention to his finance department. Thereafter he made a series of experiments for improving it. The first of these was undertaken in 1563 when Akbar appointed Aitmad Khan to look into the affairs of the *khalsa* lands,

which comprised the provinces of Agra and Delhi and a part of Lahore. These two and a half subas were divided into several areas, each yielding a crore of dams or two and a half lakhs of rupees. The measure introduced made no fundamental change in the system of assessment. Sher Shah's schedules of assessment, which were in vogue since the time of Humayun and uniformly applied to all the parganas of his dominions, the rates differing only in respect of each crop, continued in operation as before. The land was measured locally and the state demand was converted into cash on the basis of the prices of various kinds of crops fixed by the emperor. The prices fixed were also uniform for all the parganas and were usually those current in the vicinity of the capital or the court. In 1566 the second experiment was undertaken. Muzaffar Khan, who was appointed diwan in 1564 with Todar Mal as his assistant, noted two glaring defects in the system, namely, the fictitious roll rent and the unfairness of converting the state demands into cash on the basis of only one schedule of prices for the whole of the empire. He achieved some success, but as the state did not yet make an arrangement for the measurement of land by its own officials and also failed to utilise the records of the patwaris in the villages, the rent roll (Hal-i-Hasil or *Juma Bundi*) prepared by Muzaffar Khan in 1566 did not fully correspond to the actual revenue. He, however, succeeded in doing away with the second defect. As a result of his efforts, the state demand was henceforth commuted into cash, not on an uniform basis but on that of the prices current in different localities. This removed only one defect in the system. So another experiment was undertaken in the thirteenth year of the reign (1569), when Shihab-ud-din Ahmad, the new diwan, abandoned Sher Shah's schedule of assessment so far as the *khalsa* land was concerned, and introduced the practice of calculating the state demand by ascertaining in a rough manner the produce of the fields. This system, technically called *nasq*, and popularly *kankut*, implies a rough estimate of the produce of the soil without measuring the unthrashed crop or grain. When the crops ripen but are still standing in the field the government agents go round each field, accompanied by the village headman and one or two other respectable people, and each man separately makes an estimate of the total yield of the field. The mean of all the separate estimates is set down as the total produce of the field on the basis of which the government share is calculated. If the cultivator of the field objects to the estimate as being too high, negotiations follow and

after some higgling, a compromise is arrived at. It is not clear whether the system introduced in 1569 was fieldwise or villagewise.

The fourth experiment occurred in the fifteenth year of the reign (1570-71) when the new schedules of assessment rates were prepared separately for each pargana and were based on the actual produce of the soil. The system was extended to include the jagir lands which had till that time been outside the scope of the experiment and of the control of revenue ministry. The *nasq* was abandoned and the schedules of assessment rates were prepared on the basis of the measurement of land and ascertainment of the actual produce by government officials. Raja Todar Mal was the author of the scheme.

This experiment apparently proved very successful, for the assessment schedules prepared on its basis remained in force for ten years, i.e., upto 1580. At the end of this period Akbar made only one more major experiment, which was to fix the assessment rates in cash. Though the rates of assessment of various kinds of grain had remained unchanged for ten years, the prices on the basis of which the state demand in kind was commuted into cash had varied from year to year and had every year required the emperor's sanction. The result was delay in the collection of revenue, as the emperor could not remain at one place and give orders for fixing the prices as soon as their tables were placed before him. To do away with this difficulty Akbar in 1580 abandoned the schedules of assessment rates in kind and fixed them in cash. The prices on the basis of which the demands in kind were commuted into cash were the average of last ten years' prices in various localities.

The revenue settlement brought into existence in 1580 by the *Ain-i-Dahsala* ordinance implied certain fixed processes. First of all, the land in the empire was surveyed according to a uniform system of measurement, based on Sikandar Lodi's *gaz* or yard, measuring 41 digits or 33 inches. The *jarib* based on the *gaz* used by Sher Shah was made of hempen rope and was liable to contract and expand in cold and hot weathers respectively. Akbar substituted a bamboo *jarib* whose pieces were joined together by iron rings. The *bigha* which was the unit of area measured 60 yds. by 60 yds. or 3600 sq. yards. The total area of cultivable land in the possession of each cultivator in each village, each pargana, each district, and each province, and finally of the whole empire was ascertained. Secondly, all the cultivable land was classified into four divisions.

The basis of classification was not the kind of land or fertility of the soil, but the continuity or otherwise of its cultivation. (1) The *polaj* land belonged to the first category and was always cultivated. (2) *Parauti* land too was almost always cultivated but left fallow for a year or two in order to recuperate its fertility. (3) *Chachar* land had to be left uncultivated for three or four years. (4) *Banjar* land had to be left fallow for five years or more. Each of the first three kinds of land was sub-divided into three grades and the average produce of the three grades of each was taken and considered as standard for each class. Thirdly, on the basis of past ten years' produce the average yield per bigha of each kind of land in respect of every crop was ascertained separately for every pargana. The state charged one-third of the average produce. Fourthly, the state demand in kind was commuted into cash. For this purpose, Akbar divided his entire empire into many *dasturs*. All the places in a *dastur* were supposed to have uniform prices for each kind of corn. An average of last ten years' prices in respect of each kind of crop was ascertained separately for each *dastur*. The average was considered as the current price of grain. There were separate schedules of prices of different kinds of corn and the schedules of prices differed from *dastur* to *dastur*.

The state demand from each cultivator was fixed on the basis of the above calculation. It was not necessary to ascertain every year the actual produce or the current prices of grain in order to fix the state demand from the cultivators. All that was needed was to find out the kind and area of land under cultivation and the kind of crop raised by a cultivator in a given season. And both the cultivator and the government would calculate the amount of revenue the former was required to pay and the latter to realise. The government was in a position to ascertain its land revenue within a month or so of the termination of the seed-sowing season. It did not, however, imply that after the introduction of the *Ain-i-Dahsala* the government ceased to maintain the records of the produce and of prices of corn. The officials in the parganas and in the villages continued as before to record the name of each kind of land, its area, its produce including the particulars of the crops, in the possession of every cultivator. They also recorded the current prices of all kinds of grain in each *dastur*. These records were absolutely necessary and served the basis of future settlements.

Scholars have held opposite views about the *Ain-i-Dahsala*. V. A. Smith calls it ten years' settlement and seems to think that it

was based on the average produce of past ten years. He makes no mention of the average of last ten years' prices on the basis of which the state demand in kind was converted into cash. On the other hand, W. H. Moreland, who devoted twenty years to the study of the fiscal problems of the Mughul age, refers to the average of ten years' cash demands only and makes no mention of ten years' average produce of each kind of land in respect of each crop. Prof. Sri Ram Sharma seems to maintain that the basis of Akbar's settlement till the end of his reign was the schedule of rates established by Sher Shah. Dr. R. P. Tripathi does not clearly specify the two averages, namely, those of produce and of prices. A close study of the subject, however, leads one to the conclusion that Akbar's settlement of 1580 was based on average produce of past ten years and that the state demand in cash was commuted into kind on the basis of the average prices of the last ten years. As has been shown above, for the purpose of ascertaining the average produce, each pargana was treated as unit, while the *dastur* was the unit for determining the prices. It is certain that the settlement was not permanent. Nor was it annual, as Abul Fazl says that Akbar had abandoned Sher Shah's annual settlement which was a source of delay and corruption. The state demand seems to have been revised periodically on the basis of the actual produce of the soil. Although there is no definite record on the point it seems to have been a ten years' settlement. Records of actual produce of every crop raised by each cultivator and also the prices of every kind of crop current in each *dastur* were meticulously maintained even after the establishment of the *Ain-i-Dahsala*.

The system was originally introduced in the *khalsa* territory only. Its scope was extended in 1581-82 to include the *jagir* lands also. Henceforward the *jagirdars* were not permitted to administer their *jagirs* as they liked. Also an attempt was made to reclaim as much of *banjar* land as possible. For this purpose loans were advanced to the cultivators who undertook the labour of bringing such land under cultivation. Collectors were instructed to charge only a nominal revenue for such land and raise it only gradually and assess full revenue only when the *banjar* land had reached the level of *polaj*. Like Sher Shah, Akbar charged one-third of the produce as revenue and that, of course, in cash, though collections in kind were permitted in exceptional cases. Being a practical statesman Akbar allowed various modes of assessment, such as, *ghalla bakhsi* or *batai*, *nasq* or *kankut*, and *zabti* or *naqdi*, to prevail in

different localities.* The settlement was made direct with the cultivators and was, therefore, like Sher Shah's system, *rayatwari*. Every cultivator was given a *patta* (title deed) and was required to sign a *qabuliyat* (deed of agreement). These documents contained a specification of the plots of land in the possession of a cultivator, their area and the rate of revenue he was required to pay. The state granted remission, if an unexpected calamity befell a village or pargana. The extent of damage was carefully ascertained and a proportionate remission of revenue was ordered by the central government.

The work of revenue collection was entrusted to the government officials in the parganas and in districts, notably to the *amil* or *amal guzar*. The collectors were assisted by qanungos, patwaris and village headmen. Besides these, many survey officers and clerks were employed in every pargana to prepare seasonal crop statistics. The latter were paid, while on active duty, daily allowances and ration. Probably a portion of the ration had to be borne by the peasantry. The patwari, who was a servant of the village community, was required to work in co-operation with them. The qanungos in the time of Akbar were state servants and were paid Rs. 20, 30, or 50 a month. For the guidance of amins, shiqdars, amils, bitikchis (*karkuns*) and other officials connected with survey of land, assessment of its produce and collection of revenue, *dastur-ul-amals* or codes of 'Customary Practice' peculiar to every pargana, were laid down in writing. These were compiled by qanungos or hereditary revenue officers connected with various parganas. In addition to the *dastur-ul-amals*, 'full and judicious' instructions were issued for the benefit of officers of the revenue department. These are compared by the historian Smith with Thomson's Directions to Collectors meant for district collectors of the British days in the country. The collectors were given a great deal of discretion. They were required to be friendly to the agriculturists, to advance loans (*taqavi*) to the needy peasants and to recover them gradually. They were empowered to grant remissions in case of damage done to crops by a natural calamity or other reasons in order to encourage cultivation. They were not to charge revenue except for the area under actual cultivation and to receive payment directly from the cultivators and not through intermediaries, such as, headmen who were to be avoided as

*For these systems of assessment, see the author's *Sher Shah and His Successors*, pp. 73-74.

far as possible. They were to endeavour to recover arrears, but without using undue force. The special instruction given was that they should in every way possible advance the interests of the agriculturists and safeguard their rights. The collectors were required to send to the court a monthly statement of "the condition of the people, the state of public security, the range of market prices and rents, the condition of the poor, and all other contingencies." The historian Smith is all praise for the system. "In short," writes he, "the system was an admirable one. The principles were sound and the practical instructions to officials all that could be desired." (*Akbar, the Great Mogul*, pp. 376-377)

While the land revenue settlement and the principles on which it was based have been highly praised by Anglo-Indian writers, who had been closely connected with the revenue administration of the government of India during the British rule, they have expressed doubt whether the revenue officials in the districts and parganas honestly enforced the imperial regulations. "But a person," observes V. A. Smith, "cannot help feeling considerable scepticism concerning the conformity of practice with precept. Even all the resources of the modern Anglo-Indian government often fail to secure such conformity, and in Akbar's time supervision undoubtedly was far less strict and searching." (*Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 377). Secondly, according to these writers, Akbar's assessment was extremely severe. While one must admit that 'conformity of practice with precept' is difficult to achieve, and that there was a great deal of official corruption in the revenue department, the regulations were probably more faithfully enforced by officials and complied with by the public than under the British rule. The standard of public morality and law-abidingness was without doubt higher among our people in the sixteenth century than in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. People considered it a religious duty to abide by their word and paid off their debt in the second or third generation without even any legal document to enforce payment. Contemporary European observers were struck by the honesty of our ancestors of the 16th and 17th centuries and their habit to obey time-honoured rules and regulations without murmur. We know it for a fact that theft and robberies were far less frequent during the medieval period of our country's history than under the British rule and this inspite of the latter's much more highly organised police and espionage depart-

ments. It may, therefore, be legitimately inferred that the condition in every department of government including the revenue was then not less satisfactory than in our days. In fact popular tradition ascribes new devices of evasion of rules and resort to corruption to the system introduced by the British during whose dominion the pernicious practice spread from Bangal to the rest of the country. As regards the severity of the assessment it cannot be denied that Akbar's rates were higher than those obtaining during the ancient period in this country. It could hardly have been otherwise as almost all the Sultans of Delhi with the exception of Firoz Tughluk had charged higher rates and Sher Shah too, famous though he was for his revenue settlement, had fixed one-third of the produce as the state demand and charged *jaribana*, *mahasilana* and insurance tax in addition. Akbar did not charge from the peasantry *jaribana*, *mahasilana* and insurance tax. As for the European view that the incidence of land tax was higher under Akbar than under the British, it should be noted that he did not recognise the existence of landlords and that the produce of the soil was shared between the government and the cultivator. Under the zamindari system which obtained in most parts of the country during the British rule the zamindars charged 1/2 of the produce from the cultivator, while the sixteenth-century peasantry had to pay only 1/3. Tradition as well as evidence confirms the opinion that the peasant was better off under Akbar than at any time under the British rule in this country. He has happily come to his own as the result of our agrarian legislation introduced after 15th August, 1947.

Currency

During the early years of his reign Akbar adopted the currency system of his predecessors and made only nominal modifications, such as the insertion of his name and titles and the place and years of mintage on his coins. His mints were in charge of minor officers called chaudharis and there was little co-ordination between various mints. In 1577 the emperor undertook the reform of the currency and appointed Khwaja Abdus Samad Shirazi, a noted painter and calligraphist, to be the superintendent of the imperial mint at Delhi. All the mints at provincial headquarters which had hitherto been under chaudharis, were placed under more responsible officers who were required to work under the supervision of Abdus Samad. The Delhi staff under Abdus Samad consisted of a darogha (assistant

superintendent), a sarafi (assayer), an amin (assistant to the darogha), a treasurer, a mushrif (accountant), a weighman, a melter of ore, a plate maker and a merchant whose duty was to supply gold, silver and copper. A similar staff must have existed in each of the provincial mints at Lahore, Jaunpur, Ahmadabad, Patna and Tanda (in Bangal).

The mints issued gold, silver and copper coins. The silver coin known as the rupee was round in shape, like its modern successor, and weighed 172½ grains. Akbar also issued a square rupee called Jalali but it was not so common and popular as the circular rupee. The rupee had its one-half, one-fourth, one-eighth, one-sixteenth and one-twentieth pieces. The chief copper coin was the *dam* or *paisa* or *fulus*. It weighed 323·5 grains or almost 21 grams. The ratio between the dam and the rupee was 40 to 1. The lowest copper coin was the *jital*, and 25 *jitals* made one *paisa*. The most common gold coin was the *ilahi* which was equal to ten rupees in value. The biggest gold coin was the *sahansah* which weighed a little over 101 tolas and must have been used in high business transactions. All the coins of various metals were characterised by 'purity of metal, fulness of weight and artistic execution'. They bore caligraphic inscriptions containing the name and titles of the emperor and the place and year of mintage. Only a few coins had figures inscribed upon them. They were probably intended to be commemorative medals.

Akbar is entitled to high praise for placing the currency on sound scientific foundation, and his coins have been highly spoken of by modern numismatists. "Akbar," writes V. A. Smith, "deserves high credit for the excellence of his extremely varied coinage, as regards purity of metal, fulness of weight and artistic execution. The Mughul coinage, when compared with that of Queen Elizabeth or other contemporary sovereigns in Europe, must be pronounced far superior on the whole. Akbar and his successors seem never to have yielded to the temptation of debasing the coins in either weight or purity. The gold in many of Akbar's coins is believed to be practically pure." (*Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 157).

Law and justice

The medieval judicial system was based on Islamic law which divides the people into two classes—believers and non-believers—does not recognise the latter as citizens of the state. The non-

Muslims were suffered to live as *zimmis*, i.e., the people living under contract, and certain disabilities and restrictions were imposed upon them. The king was required to administer the Islamic law in deciding all cases, whether the parties to a suit were Muslims or non-Muslims. But as it was not possible in actual practice to enforce Islamic law on the Hindus, who constituted a vast majority of the population and had a highly developed system of jurisprudence of their own, a compromise was effected, and while criminal cases continued to be decided according to Islamic law in all cases, Hindu law was administered in deciding civil and religious disputes of which the parties were Hindus. As over seventyfive per cent of the people lived in villages which were in practice autonomous communities, the medieval sultans had little to do with the administration of justice in the rural areas. In the cities they took cognisance of all cases arising out of any cause so far as the Muslim population was concerned ; but as for the Hindus, only those causes that came within the scope of criminal law, which was applicable to Hindus and Muslims alike, went to the royal court.

Although Akbar had rejected the Islamic theory of kingship, he made no fundamental change in the judicial system that he inherited from his predecessors. He, however, made minor changes in the system and reorganised it so as to make it efficient. An important change introduced by him was to restrict the scope of Islamic law and to extend that of general or customary law of the land so as to make it include as many causes as possible. For example, he did not apply the Islamic law of capital punishment for apostacy from Islam or for propagating Hinduism or Christianity. Thirdly, he appointed Hindu judges to decide the cases of Hindus. (*Badayuni*, Vol. II, p. 376).

The king was the highest judge in the empire. According to the immemorial custom of the East, he held court and decided cases in person. Usually, the king's court was the highest court of appeal ; but sometimes he decided initial cases also. Akbar spent some time every day in listening to complaints from the people and settling their disputes in a summary fashion. On Thursdays he held a formal court of justice to hear and decide major cases, when besides parties to a suit only high judicial officials and a few nobles noted for their probity and integrity were admitted. Although governors of provinces were empowered to pass the sentence of death on persons guilty of heinous crimes, they generally forwarded such cases to the

emperor who inflicted the punishment in extreme cases. The royal orders had to be taken three times before the capital punishment could be executed.

The next judicial authority was the chief qazi, who was also almost invariably the chief sadr and was appointed by the emperor and worked during his pleasure. He was paid his salary in cash and was, besides, given an assignment of land entitled *Madad-i-Mash* or subsistence allowance. Originally the chief qazi's main qualifications used to be his knowledge of Islamic theology and his narrow sectarian views. But Akbar appointed to this post men of liberal religious outlook and broad sympathies towards all sections of the people. The chief qazi appointed provincial, district and city qazis subject to the approval of the emperor. There were qazis at the headquarters of the parganas, but none in any of the villages, wherein justice was administered by the people's panchayats. There was a separate qazi for the army whose jurisdiction was limited to the army. Sometimes more than one qazi was appointed in a city with defined jurisdiction for each. There are muftis to assist the qazis. Their main duty was to interpret the law and issue a *fatwa*. When a qazi himself possessed qualifications of issuing *fatwa*, he naturally did not require the assistance of a mufti. In most important towns there were muhtasibs who examined weights and measures, prevented gambling and drinking and saw that Muslims offered their five daily prayers and kept the Ramzan fasts. Thus he, too, performed judicial duties and enforced social legislation. There were Mir Adils at the capital and provincial headquarters, but not in small towns or parganas. Their duties were similar to those of the qazis.

Besides deciding cases the qazi's duty was to inspect the jails and review the conditions of prisoners. He was empowered to discharge prisoners deserving freedom, but not without a careful examination of their cases. The qazi was also the trustee of waqfs in his jurisdiction. While trying cases, he was instructed to have the evidence recorded by the court clerks, to frame charge-sheet and read it out to the culprit. Witnesses had to be examined and the culprit was given an opportunity to defend himself. Akbar emphasised the necessity of studying the psychology and physiognomy of culprits and invariably instructed the judges to ascertain the truth by cross-examination.

The organisation of the courts and their relations to one another were rather crude. The higher courts, including those of the king and the chief quazi, not only heard appeals but also decided initial cases. It was not necessary that an appeal from a city court should go to the district or provincial court before reaching the court of chief qazi. Sometimes an appeal from the city court lay to the district court, sometimes to the provincial court and at others to the chief qazi's court and even direct to the king's court. Secondly, the same type of cases were decided by a number of officers and it was not specified as to which type or category of cases should be heard by the lower courts. For example, not only the qazi but also the Mir Adil and the governor of a province administered criminal cases involving exactly the same kind of guilt. Civil justice was administered by qazis, Mir Adils and diwans of provinces. Thirdly, there was no separation of executive and judicial functions, and executive officers like the governor and the diwan were entrusted with judicial administration also. Fourthly, the law was not properly codified. The Hindu and Muslim personal laws, that is, those relating to inheritance, marriage, divorce, etc., were given in law books of the two communities, but the customary law of the land was not committed to writing and was applied at the discretion of the judges. Fifthly, according to modern standards the criminal law was very severe and punishments inflicted were out of proportion to the guilt.

Islamic law which was applied in deciding criminal cases, recognises four kinds of punishments : (1) *Qisas*, i.e., retaliation. It was applied to cases of killing and wounding. (2) *Diya* or compensation. It, too, was applied to cases of murder or wounding. (3) *Hadd* or punishment unambiguously prescribed by the Muslim law for offences relating to adultery. (4) *Tazir* or punishment inflicted by the judge at his discretion. This related to crimes which did not come under the category of *Hadd*.

The punishments usually inflicted were : imprisonment for various terms, internment and fines, confiscation of property, flogging, mutilation of limbs, banishment and execution. Capital punishment in most cases was inflicted by the emperor, though provincial governors were authorised to pass the sentence of death for grave offences, such as adultery, treason, sedition and murder. A criminal was usually thrown under the feet of an elephant and trampled to death.

Prisons

There were two kinds of prisons, one for prisoners of high rank and the other for ordinary criminals. Important nobles and princes guilty of treason and rebellions were imprisoned in the fortresses situated in different parts of the country, the prominent among them being those at Gwalior, Ranthambhor, Rohtas, Bhakkar and Bayana. There were jails at the capital and at the headquarters of the provinces, districts and the pargana. Besides regular prisoners, undertrials were also kept confined in jails. The jails were frequently inspected by high officials of the judicial department who inquired into the condition of the prisoners and released those of them who had suffered enough. Sometimes the emperor paid visits to the prison-houses at the capital, while the governors inspected the provincial jails. Conditions of accommodation, sanitation, health and diet of prisoners in jails were not as satisfactory as they are today.

The police system

Akbar's police administration was well organised and efficient. The police may be divided into three categories of urban, district and village police. In all the cities and towns of the empire there were kotwals charged with the duty of maintaining public order and decency. The kotwal's functions have already been enumerated. He was both the head of the city police and committing and trying magistrate. He had to apprehend thieves, robbers and other petty criminals and to punish them. His main duty was to see that the life of the city continued undisturbed. Besides, he had to examine weights and measures, keep an eye on the currency and to enforce Akbar's social legislation. He was held personally responsible for the value of the property stolen in case he failed to discover the thief. He was authorised to inflict on offenders punishment which included torture, mutilation of limbs and flogging. He was, however, not empowered to inflict the penalty of death. In short, the kotwal's duties were quite comprehensive and his powers wide and despotic. In the district, law and order was maintained by the faujdar who was assisted in this work by the amils and other revenue officers of the parganas. Of course, the faujdar had a kotwal at the district headquarters to take charge of the police duty of the city. The faujdar's main duties were the policing of roads of the district and suppressing disorders of all kinds. Like the kotwal he was responsi-

ble for producing the stolen property, if he failed to trace the thief. He possessed the power of dealing summarily with disturbances, and in normal times he successfully maintained peace and tranquillity. There were more than one *thana* or police station in a pargana. As for the police administration of the villages, Akbar, following the immemorial custom of the country, established the principle of local responsibility. The village headman was required to discover the thieves and robbers within a specified time. In the event of his failure, he had to make good the loss from his own pocket. If a crime occurred on the boundary of more than one village, the headmen of the villages concerned were held responsible for it. Usually the entire village was answerable for every crime and was laid under contribution for making good the loss. There was, however, a chaukidar for every village for normal police work.

The police arrangement under Akbar was fairly efficient and maintained a high standard of public order and tranquillity. It will, however, be idle to imagine that there were no cases of theft, immorality, cheating or disturbances of public peace. There were professional thieves and robbers in the hills and the jungles who descended to the plains to ply their trade whenever there was lack of vigilance on the part of the local police. Though they are exaggerated in some particulars, the accounts of contemporary European travellers yield a fairly accurate picture of the state of the country in the second half of the sixteenth century. But in view of the law-abidingness and high morality of the people and the severity of the penal law the standard of public security was not lower than it is in our time.

Education

In the sixteenth century no government in any country in the world considered it to be its duty to educate the public. Even England recognised this duty as late as 1870. Akbar was, however, far in advance of his age and made an attempt to raise the intellectual level of the people. Although he did not establish a network of schools and colleges all over the country for the benefit of the school-going population and did not allocate a fixed percentage of the state revenue for expenditure on education yet he encouraged education in diverse ways. There were in his empire primary and secondary schools, and even colleges. Some of them were established and maintained by government, while others depended upon private philanthropy. There was a

maktab or primary school attached to every mosque where elementary reading, writing, arithmetic, besides the Quran, were taught. In addition to these, there were madrasahs which may be called secondary schools or colleges. Akbar established colleges at Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Delhi and other places, and richly endowed them. His example was followed by his courtiers. Quite early in his reign Maham Anaga had built a madrasah near the western gate of purana Qila at Delhi. Khwaja Muin established a college at Delhi. There were many such colleges in all important towns with a sufficiently large Muslim population. In these colleges Islamic theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, logic and astronomy were taught by distinguished teachers, some of whom had received education outside India. There were schools and higher centres of learning for the Hindus in every part of the country. Inspite of the destruction wrought by the iconoclastic zeal of the early Turkish invaders, Hindu centres of learning had not completely disappeared. There was a remarkable revival of our ancient learning during the age of Akbar. There was a school in every village and in fact a school attached to every temple where reading, writing and arithmetic and religious books were taught. In higher centres of learning, Hindu theology, Sanskrit grammar, philosophy, literature, logic, astronomy, higher mathematics and other sciences were studied. Akbar made an attempt to revise the curriculum and to include certain important subjects in the courses of study meant for grown up boys at schools and colleges. These subjects were science of morals and social behaviour, arithmetic, notations peculiar to arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy and foretelling, household economy, public administration, medicine, logic, and *tabi*, the *riyazi* and the *illahi* sciences and history. Students of Sanskrit were required to study grammar, philology, logic, Vedanta and Patanjali. These were to be studied gradually. The teacher was only to assist the pupils to learn. Students were particularly advised to commit moral precepts* and sayings to memory, and no one was to neglect "those things which the present time required". Probably colleges were required to specialise in some of the above subjects. It is unlikely that every institution was required to teach all the above subjects. Another reform introduced was to open the madrasahs to Hindus. For the first time in medieval India, Hindus and Musal-

* Ain 25, vide *Ain-i-Akbari* (Blochmann), Vol. I, pp. 278-279.

mans received their education in common schools and read the same books. The reform was necessitated by the fact that Akbar had made Persian compulsory for all the state officials and by his desire to create a common nationality.

V. A. Smith erroneously supposes that the reform had no relation to facts and was, therefore, unreal and useless. The system produced remarkable men in every walk of life who contributed to the success of the later days of Akbar and of the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan and were able enough to shed lustre on any age and in any country. This is enough to show that the reform had proved efficacious. Akbar's court was a centre of learning and art. The emperor, his courtiers and officials were liberal patrons of letters. The age consequently witnessed a cultural renaissance of a high order. Works of high literary value were produced in various subjects, particularly on historiography. The Hindi poetry of Akbar's age is unrivalled and has become classical for all time. Such high production would have been impossible without proper educational organisation and atmosphere.

The court played a very important part in the emperor's scheme of the propagation of education and culture. Akbar encouraged men of letters and arts to produce standard scientific and literary works on a variety of subjects. Books on religion, philosophy, literature, biography, history, mathematics, astronomy, medicine and other subjects were brought out in large numbers. Poetry was not neglected. Fine arts like architecture, music and painting were also encouraged. Inspired by the laudable ambition of creating a common culture, Akbar established a Translation Department and had outstanding works in Sanskrit, Arabic and Turki rendered into Persian, so as to enable the Hindus and Muslims to know the best in each other's religion and culture. For the above purpose the services of high-ranking scholars in the country were requisitioned. Many famous scholars from outside India were also invited to assist the indigenous talent in the above work. Many a Sanskrit treatise, including the Vedas and the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, was rendered into Persian. Arabic works of repute on Muslim theology and arts were also translated into Persian. A school of Indian historiography was founded and a large number of histories were written by eminent historians. Libraries were opened. The royal library in the palace was one of the most wonderful institutions of the kind in the world. It consisted of many thousand books all of

which were manuscripts, sumptuously bound and beautifully illustrated. The books were classified according to their subject-matter and the language in which they were written. There were Sanskrit, Persian, Greek, Kashmiri and Arabic works.

Hindi, which was coming into prominence, was patronised. Although the education as planned by Akbar was through the medium of Persian which was the court language and compulsory for state servants, schools attached to temples and private institutions founded and maintained by the Hindus must have imparted knowledge through the medium of Hindi. The measures undertaken by the emperor indicated a desire on his part to raise the moral and intellectual standard of the people. It must, however, be admitted that the scheme was meant mainly for the upper and middle class people.

Religious policy

It has been shown in a previous chapter that the inquisitive Akbar made a scientific examination of various religions then known in India and that his enquiry led him to the conclusion that there was truth in every religion. He thought it undesirable, therefore, that a comparatively young religion like Islam should be considered to possess the monopoly of Truth and continue as the religion of the State. Hence he abolished Islam as the religion of the State and established in its place, a religion of his own choice known as the *Din-i-Ilahi*. This new religion, which has been compared to the theosophical order of our time, was an eclectic faith and consisted of good principles culled from every religion. It was based on "reason" and not the "authority of any man". It was Akbar's policy not to impose his religion by force on his subjects. It was, therefore, confined to the court circle and had just a few thousand followers. Even after the establishment of the *Din-i-Ilahi*, Akbar pursued the policy of giving full religious toleration to his people. It was but natural for a monarch who believed that there was truth in every religion and that there was the same God everywhere, whether He be worshipped in a church, a mosque, a temple, or a synagogue, to treat all religions alike and to give the followers of every faith complete freedom of conscience and worship. Contrary to the practice which had existed since the advent of Islam in the country, Hindus were permitted to perform public worship and to preach their religion. Those Hindu men, women and children who were

forcibly converted to Islam were allowed to go back to their ancestral religion, if any liked. Christians were allowed to build churches and proselytise Hindus and Muslims to Christianity. No kind of disability was imposed on any one on account of his faith. State employment was open to all people irrespective of their race, caste or religious belief. These religious reforms appeared revolutionary inasmuch as they brought down Islam from its position of dominance which it had enjoyed for centuries, to one of equality with other religions. Its important followers, particularly the *Ulema* who had hitherto presumed to guide the State and shape its religious policy, were greatly disturbed at the change. They levelled charges of irreligiosity and even apostacy against Akbar and instigated the Muslim public to rebel against him. Early in 1580 Mullah Muhammad Yazdi, the Qazi of Jaunpur, issued a *fatwa* to the effect that the emperor had ceased to be a Muslim and rebellion against him was lawful. About this very time Akbar had introduced certain administrative reforms, such as, conversion of jagir lands to *khalsa* (reserve) land and cutting down of allowances of imperial officers. The discontent caused by these reforms persuaded some of the high imperial officers in Bihar and Bangal to join hands with the disaffected and humiliated Muslim theologians and they broke out into a fearful rebellion. The immediate political effect of Akbar's policy of religious toleration was not good and involved the country in a civil war ; but the emperor was not to be cowed down into surrender and abandonment of the statesmanlike policy of treating all religions alike. He put down the rebellion and *severely chastised* the malcontents. The policy of absolute religious toleration stood the test and continued throughout his reign and with some modification down to the time of Aurangzeb.

Some modern scholars, notably V. A. Smith and Woolseley Haig, have held that, while Akbar gave complete religious toleration to other faiths, he persecuted Islam. This view is based on the statements of the Jesuit missionaries and of the historian Badayuni. The former, in their anxiety to show to their superiors in Goa and Lisbon the success of their mission and that the emperor was well on the way to embrace Christianity, sent highly exaggerated and even false reports to them. They informed the credulous Christians of Europe that he had not only abandoned Islam but was persecuting it. Badayuni was a bigoted mullah in whose eyes justice and fairness shown to other religions was tantamount to injustice to and perse-

cution of Islam. As has been mentioned, the very fact that Islam had ceased to be the state religion gave moral offence to its orthodox followers. They denounced as persecution of Islam such unexceptionable measures as the giving of equal privileges to every faith for the propagation of its principles and the allowing of freedom to the converts to revert to their original religions, if they liked. Badayuni gives a long list of the so-called measures of persecution. They are :

(1) Akbar made it obligatory to wear silk dresses and ornaments at prayer time.
(2) He forbade Islamic prayers.
(3) He stopped the call to prayer in the Assembly Hall.
(4) He prohibited Muslim fasts.
(5) Pilgrimage to Mecca was prohibited.
(6) Muslim festivals were discontinued.
(7) No one was allowed to give the name of Muhammad and Ahmad to his children.
(8) Mosques were plundered and converted into stables.
(9) Shaving of beards was allowed.
(10) Flesh of wild boars, pigs and tigers was permitted.
(11) Study of Arabic was discouraged.
(12) Those who killed cows and other animals on prohibited days were punished, sometimes with capital punishment.

A critical examination of the charges makes it clear that most of them were groundless. If Akbar had forbidden Islamic prayers, it was superfluous to order silk dresses and ornaments to be put on at the prayer time. We know from Badayuni's own book and from the writings of the Jesuit missionaries that Muslim call to prayer and five daily prayers were common enough throughout Akbar's reign. It is ridiculous to imagine that the masses should have been ordered not to keep the fast of Ramzan. Similarly, pilgrimage to Mecca continued to be undertaken as before. We know it from several sources, including the Jesuit missionaries, that as late as 1585 many men and women were permitted to proceed to Mecca. The celebration of Muslim festivals and the naming of Muhammad and Ahmad were commonplace things throughout Akbar's reign, as is clear from the statement of many a contemporary writers. There is no concrete instance to show that mosques were plundered or converted into stables. Unlike Hindu temples, mosques possess no articles of value and as such, they are not worth plundering. It may

be that at the time of war a mosque might have been utilised for military purposes. In view of our knowledge that hundreds of mosques remained and were utilised as places of worship, it seems too much to believe that any general order for their conversion into stables could have been given. We know from many paintings of the later days of Akbar's reign that the emperor's nobles and courtiers continued to grow beards. If Akbar shaved his beard and his example was followed by some of his courtiers, it should not be taken to be an instance of the persecution of Islam. Similarly, flesh of boars was not forced on any one. Probably those who ate it were not hated or punished. Akbar emphasised the study of Persian and patronised Sanskrit and Hindi. No order was issued banning Arabic. The fanatics like Badayuni thought that the encouragement of Sanskrit amounted to a ban on Arabic. It is, thus, clear that Akbar made no attempt to persecute the religion of his ancestors. What he really did was to bring it down to the level of other religions and to look upon Muhammad as a prophet and not the Prophet so far as he personally was concerned.

Public services

The Mughul imperial service, which conducted the administration so efficiently and made Akbar's reign brilliant, cannot be called national. It was mostly foreign in personnel and consisted of Turks, Mongols, Uzbegs, Persians, Arabs and Afghans, with a little sprinkling of Indian Muhammadans and Hindus. According to Blochmann, 70 per cent of Akbar's senior officials were foreigners, who had either come from Central Asia for service or had settled in this country for one or two generations. Most of them had accompanied Babur and Humayun to our land and attached themselves to the ruling family. Akbar had thrown open the higher services to the Hindus ; but the number of Hindus holding high civil and military posts was comparatively very small. Nor was the proportion of Indian Muhammadans in any way high. Among the Hindus who held high posts Rajputs predominated. Inspite of Akbar's policy of "India for the Indians" the Mughul imperial service remained a heterogeneous institution, mainly foreign in personnel, till the end of his reign.

Admission to the service was based on merit and fitness. Race, caste and creed played little part in the recruitment of its members. Sometimes political considerations obliged the emperor to appoint

certain men to high posts in the imperial service. But even these men were not promoted to the higher rank unless they had shown themselves competent by approved service and loyalty. All the members of the imperial service were given the designation of mansabdars and their rank, position and emoluments were determined by the mansabs which they held. Promotion depended upon approved service and not on seniority or pay. The emperor reserved to himself the right of promoting or degrading the highest officers including the ministers at will. Even the prime minister could be degraded to the post of governor or even to a lesser rank. Raja Todar Mal, after having served as a prime minister, was, subsequently, transferred to the post of a governor. Such examples were by no means rare. It was not necessary that an officer holding a small post should pass through various stages before his appointment to the highest post in a particular branch of service. In all cases continuance in a high post or promotion was not possible without approved service and unflinching loyalty.

The imperial service was organised on bureaucratic principles. It was military in organisation and outlook. As has been shown in connection with an account of the army, every official was the holder of a mansab or official appointment of rank and profit. He was required to maintain a contingent of troops and auxiliaries and furnish the same for the service of the State whenever called upon to do so. The members of the service, called 'mansabdars', were classified into 33 grades which ranged from the mansab of 10 to that of 10,000. Thus the imperial service was organised on definite military lines and its members were expected to perform military duties in addition to their main work, administrative or judicial. Like all bureaucracies, it was highly efficient and loyal.

There was little specialisation of appointments. Services were not clearly demarcated as administrative, revenue or judicial. In fact, there was no distinction between civil and military services even. Any officer was at any time liable to be transferred to an altogether new form of employment. For example, Raja Todar Mal, who was essentially a financier of the highest ability, was transferred more than once to act as a governor and even as a military commander. Abul Fazl, the eminent scholar and historian, was sent on a diplomatic mission and also had to conduct a military expedition in the Deccan. Raja Birbal, who was no more than a court wit, was ordered to lead an expedition against the tribal Pathans. There was

no separate educational or medical service, though teachers and physicians were employed as imperial servants.

Generally speaking, the officials were divided into two broad divisions, namely, (1) those who served the emperor at court, and (2) the others who held definite appointments, whether at the capital or in the provinces. The names of both kinds of officers were recorded in separate registers and the officers who were required to attend at court were expected to keep themselves in readiness to carry out any orders that the emperor might give. They had their own troops which, too, were kept ready for service. The officials whose names were recorded in another register held various kinds of appointments, such as, governorship or other positions in the provinces and districts, or posts in the imperial secretariat or household department.

The officials were either paid by grant of jagirs or in cash from the royal treasury. Akbar preferred the latter mode of payment; but as payment by grant of jagirs had come down from the past, he could not abolish the system altogether. But the number of officers who were paid their salaries by assignment of land was, however, very small towards the end of his reign. The salaries and allowances of the officials were enormous. A first grade mansabdar of five thousand was paid Rs. 30,000 a month, a second grade mansabdar of the same class received Rs. 29,000 a month, and a third grade official of that rank got Rs. 28,000 a month. The officials were, however, required to pay out of their salaries the cost of their military establishments. If the cost of the establishment were deducted from their salaries, the emoluments of a mansabdar of five thousand would, on a rough estimate, be Rs. 18,000, that of one thousand Rs. 5,000, and that of 500, Rs. 1,000 a month. In Akbar's time the payments were made for all the twelve months of the year.

The Mughul public service, though well-organised, suffered from certain drawbacks. In the first place, there were no regular rules of appointment, promotion or dismissal. Secondly, fixity of tenure was not guaranteed. This led to intrigues and sometimes to neglect of duty. It was the emperor's pleasure to appoint or promote any one he liked. Akbar, who possessed the never failing quality of judging human character at sight, almost invariably chose right kind of officers and promoted only those who deserved it. But under his successors, who were less gifted rulers, the imperial service began to deteriorate. Thirdly, the cost of maintaining the fixed quota of

troops and auxiliaries was very heavy. On account of the tradition of a luxuriously high standard of living and their own position in life, imperial officials of the upper grades were required to be extravagant and there was, therefore, no incentive to thrift. The average officer spent large sums on luxuries, banquets and presents, and was obliged to exploit poor people.

Inspite of these drawbacks the Mughul imperial service under Akbar was one of the most highly organised, talented, loyal and efficient services then known to the world. It carried out the imperial policy expeditiously and made Akbar's reign successful and brilliant.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The country and the people

India of the time of Akbar was very much like that of today. There were, of course, no railways nor the canal systems of the Panjab and the modern Uttar Pradesh. River-Valley projects and industrial and technological developments of independent India were unthinkable in the medieval age. There were no metalled roads. The various parts of the country and most of the important towns were connected by *kachcha* roads, shaded by trees on either side of them, and clearly demarcated by *sarais* meant for merchants and travellers to spend the night in security. Navigable rivers such as the Indus, the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Ghaghara and the rivers of Bangal were frequently used for traffic and transport of troops and goods. There were more forests in the time of Akbar than now. This was particularly the case in the districts of Gorakhpur, Gonda, Lakimpur Kheri and Bijnaur in the modern Uttar Pradesh and in several parts of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Owing to the presence of forests, wild animals were seen even in some parts of the Gangatic plains. Elephants were common in the country, south of the Ganga and the Yamuna. Lions and tigers could be shot in some parts of Malwa, and rhinoceroses and tigers were sometimes seen in the forests of the Gangatic plain. Akbar had an extensive hunting ground near Agra where various kinds of wild games were bagged. The presence of large forests and gardens was responsible for greater rainfall and productivity. Apart from these the general aspect of the country did not materially differ from that of today. The countryside was dotted with numerous villages close to one another and full of people. The modern towns of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Kanpur and Karachi had not come into existence. Ancient capitals like Kanauj

and Vijayanagar were in a state of decay. The most flourishing cities in Akbar's time were Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Delhi, Allahabad, Banaras, Lucknow, Lahore, Multan, Ujjain, Ahmadabad, Ajmer, Patna, Rajmahal and Dacca. All these were very populous and prosperous. Large gardens were found in all parts of the country, particularly in the vicinity of big towns. Not only the countryside but also the towns, as Monserrate says, looked beautiful from a distance.

The country was thickly populated with extensive patches of forests and uninhabited land interspersed here and there ; but the density of population was much less than it is today. The population was not homogeneous. Hindus, of course, formed the great majority and were divided into castes. The upper classes of them belonged mostly to the Rajput, Brahman, Kayasth and Vaish castes and they did not interdine and intermarry among themselves and the caste system was much more rigorous than in our time. Rajputs, as a rule, were military men and their tribal leaders were high-ranking mansabdars in the imperial service. The Brahmans were engaged in priestly profession or in that of teaching, while the Vaish formed the mercantile community. Kayasths were engaged largely as clerks, secretaries and revenue officers. Some of the Rajputs, belonging to the lower classes, also seemed to have been fond of highway robbery. The Muhammadans were sharply divided into two sections, namely, (1) those who had come for employment in the Mughul service or for trade and commerce from Arabia, Persia and other countries, and (2) those who were converts from the indigenous Hindu population or descendants of early converts. The number of the latter class was naturally fairly large. The foreign Muhammadan traders from Arabia and Persia had formed their settlements at the sea-ports. Those who had come for service were found mostly in northern India and a smaller number at the courts of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golkunda. Foreign Muslims predominated at Akbar's court. Besides the Arabs, the Persians, the Turks, the Mongols and the Uzbegs, there were some Abyssinians and Armenians. As the country was open to foreign adventurers and there was no check on immigration, men of many nationalities from Europe and Asia, such as, the Portuguese, the English, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Turks and the Jewish people were found in the country. The jews, like the Armenians, formed a small and powerful section of the trading community. Parsis, though small in number, wielded some influence at

Akbar's court. They had not yet taken to commerce and were engaged in agriculture or carpentry. They were settled in Navasari and other districts in Gujarat. As regards the Europeans, only the Portuguese held an important position, as they were masters of Goa and some other places on our western coast. They also possessed trading stations at the mouths of the Indus and the Ganga.

Our cities

We have fairly sufficient material for forming a concrete picture of the economic institutions and the condition of the people during the reign of Akbar. The *Ain-i-Akbari*, supplemented by some other works in Persian, and the accounts of contemporary European travellers, merchants and writers throw a flood of light on the economic condition of the country. There were many big and prosperous cities in the empire. The most important of these were Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Ajmer, Lahore, Multan, Ujjain, Burhanpur, Ahmadabad, Banaras, Allahabad, Patna, Raj Mahal, Burdwan, Hugli, Dacca and Chatgaon. European travellers were struck by the size, wealth and prosperity of our cities. "Agra and Fatehpore," writes Fitch in 1585, "are two very great cities, either of them much greater than London and very populous. Between Agra and Fatehpore are 22 miles, and all the way is a market of victuals and other things as full as though a man were still in a town, and so many people as if a man were in a market." According to Monserrate, Lahore was one of the largest cities in the world and second to none in Europe or Asia. Delhi was even larger than Lahore. Jaunpur and Allahabad were prosperous towns, and Banaras was one of the most ancient, populous and prosperous cities in the world. Burhanpur in Khandesh was very large and wealthy. Abul Fazl describes Ahmadabad as "a noble city in a high state of prosperity" which for the pleasantness of its climate and its display of the choicest productions of the whole globe is almost unrivalled. Patna in Bihar was the largest city of that province. In Bangal the most important towns were Raj Mahal, Burdwan, Hugli, Dacca and Chatgaon. It is clear from the testimony of contemporary foreign travellers that the urban population in the time of Akbar was well-to-do.

Communications

Important towns in the country were connected by roads which were metalled but kept in good condition except during the rainy

season. The roads had rows of trees on either side of them and there were walled *sarais* for travellers and merchants. Our rivers, many of which were navigable throughout the year, were used for transport of goods and traffic. Some of the rivers had bridges at important places. Munim Khan built a bridge on the Gomati at Jaunpur in the early days of Akbar's reign. There was, thus, no want of communications and roads, and rivers were used for traffic throughout the year. As in the time of Sher Shah, royal *dak* was carried by *harkaras* who were posted at every *sarai*. News travelled at the rate of 70 to 80 miles a day.

Agricultural and other products

Agriculture provided the means of livelihood to a vast majority of the people. It was carried on in much the same manner as today. Besides the usual crops, such as wheat, barley, gram, peas and oilseeds, sugarcane, indigo and poppy were cultivated in many parts of the country. There was localisation of crops, as in our own days. Sugarcane was cultivated in many parts of the modern Uttar Pradesh, Bangal and Bihar. Indigo crop was raised in many places in northern India and particularly in Central India. Cotton was also grown in most places. Agricultural implements and tools were the same as now. Artificial irrigation, however, was absent in the days of Akbar. Nevertheless, the country was self-sufficient in agricultural products and corn had not to be imported from outside even in times of scarcity. Among the non-agricultural products, fisheries, minerals, salt, opium and liquor were most important. Fish was caught in large quantities and was abundantly cheap. Iron was produced in many parts of the country and was extensively used for making tools, implements, arms, etc. There were copper mines in Rajasthan and Central India which produced large quantities of the metal in Akbar's time. Salt came from Sambhar lake and from the hills of the Panjab. It was also manufactured at many places from sea-water. Opium was extensively cultivated in Malwa and Bihar, and, inspite of Akbar's prohibitory orders, liquor was produced from *tadi* and *mahua* at many places. Saltpetre was also manufactured, as it was much in demand for munition.

Industries and crafts

The most important industry was the cultivation of cotton and manufacture of cotton cloth. Cotton industry was known to every village. There were everywhere cotton corders and weavers ; but

the principal centres of cotton manufacture were Jaunpur, Banaras, Patna, Burhanpur, Lucknow, Khairabad and Akbarpur, and many other places in the modern Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Bangal and Orissa. In fact, the entire country was familiar with this industry and the tract from Orissa to the eastern frontier and Bangal "looked like a big cotton factory." Dacca was particularly reputed for its delicate cotton fabrics. It produced large quantities of muslin, the finest cloth of cotton then known to our people. The subsidiary dyeing industry flourished side by side with the cotton industry. Edward Terry was struck with the beautiful and fast dyes produced in the country. He says that cloths were dyed or printed with "a variety of well-shaped and well-coloured flowers or figures which are so fixed on the cloth that no water can wash them out." Silk weaving industry was also in a flourishing condition. Akbar's patronage gave impetus to this industry. Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Lahore were important centres of silk-weaving and in many towns of Gujarat and Bangal large quantities of silk fabrics were produced. Next in importance were the shawl and carpet weaving industries. Kashmir was the main centre of these industries. Shawls and carpets were produced also at Lahore and Agra and some other towns. Manufacture of woollen goods was done in some places where blankets and other woollen articles were produced ; but this industry was not so common as those of silk and cotton. The textile industry provided occupation to quite a vast portion of our population next in number only to those who depended upon agriculture. Besides, there were many other small industries, such as the manufacture of wooden bedsteads, chests, boxes, stools and almirahs ; of leather goods ; of pottery ; of paper and of bricks. Terry says that he saw "many curious boxes, trunks, stand-dishes (pen-cases), carpets with excellent manufactures in the markets". Artistically designed and ornamented desks, writing cases and ivory works were also produced. Manufacture of arms, swords, arrows, bows, spears, javelins, guns and muskets was a flourishing industry, as was that of saltpetre, which was used in the making of gunpowder. These industries were financed mostly by rich merchants, who also made arrangements for their transport to foreign lands. The State, no doubt, encouraged the manufacture of goods of various kinds on a large scale, and there were attached to the court many workshops or *karkhanas* in which many hundreds of men were employed.

Foreign trade

During the reign of Akbar, our country had an active and considerable foreign trade with many countries of Asia and Europe. Akbar took keen interest in the foreign sea-borne trade and did all that was possible in that age to foster the economic prosperity of the country. The chief exports were textiles, specially various kinds of cotton fabrics, pepper, indigo, opium and various kinds of drugs and miscellaneous goods. The chief imports from foreign countries were bullion, horses, metals, silk, ivory, coral, amber, precious stones, silk cloth, velvet, brocade, broad cloth, perfumes, drugs, China goods, especially porcelain, African slaves and European wines. Chinese porcelain found much favour with Akbar and his Muslim courtiers and was, therefore, much in demand. Glass vessels were also imported from abroad, probably from Venice. Among the exports, textiles were the most important. Besides providing the need of the people in the land, the country supplied cotton cloth of many varieties to Africa, Arabia, Egypt, Burma, Malacca, the Straits and several other countries of Asia. Our cotton goods were also much in demand in European countries, such as Italy, France, England and Germany. The principal outlets for foreign sea-borne trade were Cambay, Surat and Broach in Gujarat, Lahori Bandar in Sindh, Bassein, Chaul, Dabul (modern Bhabol) in the Ratnagiri district, Goa and Bhatkal, Calicut and Cochin in Malabar and Negapatam, Masulipatam and some other ports on the east coast. In Bangal, the most important ports were Satgaon, Sripur, Chatgaon and Sonargaon. Besides these sea-routes, there were two main land-routes for export trade. They lay from Lahore to Kabul and beyond, and from Multan to Kandhar and beyond. But the sea-routes, which were comparatively secure and advantageous, were more frequently used than the land-routes. The State charged low customs duties. At Surat 3½ per cent duty was charged on all exports and imports of goods and 2 per cent on gold and silver. It had become a fixed rule with the government not to permit export of precious metals. No merchant was allowed to export gold or silver. On the other hand, large quantities of gold and silver and other precious metals were imported from abroad every year. The balance of trade invariably was in our favour.

Prices

Things of daily use, such as corn, vegetables, fruits, ghee, milk, butter, oil, fish, mutton and articles of clothing and other commodi-

ties of common use, were very cheap. Edward Terry says that "plenty of all provisions" was "very great throughout the whole monarchy," "everyone there may eat bread without scarceness." The normal rate of wheat was 12 maunds a rupee. Barley sold 8 maunds, best rice 10 maunds, mung 18 maunds, mash 16 maunds and salt 16 maunds. A sheep could be had for a rupee and a half or even less than that. Mutton sold 17 seers a rupee and milk 44 seers a rupee. Daily wages of workers were also low. An unskilled labourer was paid 2 dams, that is, 1/20 of a rupee per day ; a carpenter got 7 dams, that is, 7/40 of a rupee and other skilled workmen got 7 dams a day. The effect of all-round cheapness and low prices was that the common man could get his means of subsistence without difficulty. The historian Smith is of opinion that "the higher landless labourer in the time of Akbar and Jahangir probably had more to eat than he has now." Moreland, on the other hand, thinks that "speaking generally, the masses lived on the same economic plane as now." The truth seems to be that although the income of the common man during Akbar's time was not high, he did not suffer from starvation, nor did he feel the pinch of want of corn and other necessities of life which were plentiful and cheap. Moreover, common people had fewer needs than their successors of today.

Economic system

An important factor in the economic system during the reign of Akbar and, in fact, throughout the Mughul period was a wide gulf separating producers from consumers. The producers consisted of agriculturists, industrial workers and traders. The consuming classes were the nobles and the officers of the civil and military services, the professional and religious classes, servants and slaves, and beggars. There was superfluity of officers and domestic servants. The State and the private households could have easily done with a lesser number of officials and servants. It was the fashion with rich people to be surrounded by a crowd of retainers and menial servants. Similarly, there was a large number of religious mendicants and beggars who performed no useful function, and, consequently, a large portion of the State income was wasted on superfluous services, the cost of which had to be borne by the producing classes. The nobles and officers were paid very high salaries and they spent money lavishly on articles of luxury and display. They were fond of sumptuous dishes, costly dresses, precious jewellery, elephants and horses. They

spent extravagantly on marriages of their sons and daughters, on buildings, mausoleums and mosques, and on curious articles purchased from foreign countries. Their extravagant living led most of them into debt, and compelled them to extort money from the peasantry. The middle class people, consisting of professional classes and ordinary state employees, were fairly well off. The upper and middle class merchants were also economically prosperous, specially those who had the good luck to attach themselves to the imperial court or to some prominent nobles or officials. It seems that skilled workmen earned sufficient to lead a decent life, but the condition of unskilled workers, peons and low shopkeepers was not good. The workmen and peons were paid low wages and had to put up with ill-treatment and even oppression. Thus, the lower class people were poor and denied even ordinary comforts. They resided in mud houses, as now, and had very few belongings.

Famines

In a country where crops depend upon rainfall, the failure of seasonal rains is almost invariably followed by a famine. North-western India suffered from a severe famine in 1555-56, that is, the first year of Akbar's reign. It was accompanied with a pestilence which took a heavy toll of human life. For about six months during 1573-74, Gujarat suffered from a famine and many of the inhabitants of the province had to migrate to other parts of the country. During 1595-96 scarcity of rainfall brought about a famine in Kashmir and the Panjab where many people died of starvation. Bangal was visited by famine in 1575. As usual, famines were followed by epidemics causing a fearful destruction of human life.

We learn from Abul Fazl that it was Akbar's policy to make arrangements for relieving the distress of the famine-stricken people. We know definitely that in 1595 he appointed Shaikh Farid a special officer to supervise relief measures. We have no material to form a concrete picture of the details of the relief work undertaken by Akbar's government.

Games and sports

Akbar had inherited from his ancestors a love of hunting which had become his regular pastime. His nobles and courtiers followed his example. Hawking was another hobby of Akbar. The game of polo was a favourite game of upper class people during the 16th

century. Animal combats were arranged periodically by the court, and people gathered to witness the fight of elephants, tigers and wild boars. Wrestling and pigeon-flying were quite common, and so was boxing. Abul Fazl gives a list of famous athletes of Akbar's time and states that two well-matched wrestlers used to contend every day before the emperor, who rewarded them after the match. Akbar learnt pigeon-flying from one of his tutors and continued to take interest in this pastime until his old age. Pigeon-flying remained popular throughout the Mughul period and it is so even now in some important cities like Agra and Lucknow. Kite-flying was as popular as it is today.

Indoor games were favourites of upper class people during the age of Akbar. The emperor himself exhibited keenness at chess or *shatranj* which seems to have come down to us from ancient days in our country. From India it spread to Arabia, Persia and China. The game was considered lawful even by orthodox Muslims and hence was equally common in well-to-do Hindu and Muslim homes. Another indoor game, which was popular as chess, was *chaupar* or backgammon. Next in popularity was the game of *phansa*, and the fourth was *pachisi*, which was played with *cowries*. These games, namely, *chaupar*, *phansa* and *pachisi*, were played on a cloth board in the form of a cross, each of four arms of the cross being divided into twenty-four squares in three rows of eight each. The squares were indicated by patches of coloured cloth. Akbar was particularly fond of *chandalmandal* and *pachisi*. The figures of these games can even now be seen in the Agra Fort. Playing cards were also common.

Fairs and festivals

Our people of the medieval age took great delight in entertainments, amusements, fairs and festivals. Akbar's court was a centre of national festivals, such as Rakshabandhan, Dashahra, Diwali and Vasant. These Hindu festivals had been adopted by the Mughul court and were celebrated with great display. The Persian festival of Nauroz was also celebrated by the court under Akbar for a week or more every year. The birthdays of the emperor and crown princes, the anniversaries of the emperor's accession according to solar and lunar calculations were observed on such a grand scale as to give the impression of a festival. Hindus were very fond of going on pilgrimage to their holy places, which were found in all parts of

the country. The sacred places where periodical fairs were held and which were thronged by thousands of people, were Hardwar, Thaneshwar, Mathura, Ayodhya, Prayag, Gaya, Ujjain, Puri, Conjevaram and Rameshwaram. Akbar had abolished the 'pilgrim's tax' on the Hindus as early as 1563, which must have given great impetus to Hindu pilgrimage. Muslims undertook pilgrimage to Ajmer and Mecca. The State afforded them every facility. A large number of Indian-built ships were kept on the west coast for carrying pilgrims to the Red Sea. In 1575, Akbar issued a general order that whoever wished to go on pilgrimage to Mecca might charge his expenses to the public treasury. A large number of Muslims availed themselves of this offer. Akbar maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese who had established their supremacy on the Sea. The Portuguese sometimes charged not only licence fee for the ships but also compelled the pilgrims to pay them huge bribes.

Some of the common recreations were shows and performances such as *Kathputli*, juggler's performances, monkey-dances, acrobat's antics and Ram Lila. Marriages, and other *sanskars* also afforded recreation and amusement to the common people. Nautch and music were very common in all parts of the country.

Intemperance was a common evil from which the upper classes of our society suffered during the medieval age. Akbar, like his ancestors, used to drink, but perhaps sparingly. He seems to have liked *tadi* or country-made liquor and not European wine. All his sons were confirmed drunkards. Two of them died of excessive drinking and the third one, Jahangir, escaped his brothers' fate on account of his robust constitution. Inspite of the Quranic prohibition, Muslim courtiers were generally addicted to liquor. Rajputs, too, were fond of wine and opium. Some of the other castes in royal employment seemed to have familiarity with wine, but our common people were free from this evil. Both on account of tradition and religious considerations the masses were temperate and abstemious.

Literature and art

Persian Literature. The reign of Akbar was a period of renaissance in Medieval Indian history. His tolerant and benevolent policy and his patronage of learning, coupled with internal peace and prosperity and freedom from foreign danger, made possi-

ble the conditions in which letters and art flourish. It is no surprise, therefore, that volumes of literature were produced by scholars of outstanding ability. Persian literature may be classified under two heads, namely, original compositions and translations. Under the first category letters and poetry occupied a prominent place. It was a fashion with writers in that age to leave behind collections of letters which were considered to be models of literary style. Abul Fazl's letters, known as *Insha-i-Abul-Fazl*, have been printed by the Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow. They were regarded as models of epistolary composition and were imitated by scholars throughout the Mughul period. Even the puritan emperor, Aurangzeb, who condemned Abul Fazl as a heretic, commended the latter's style to his sons. Many other collections from the pen of other distinguished essayists have come down to us and some of them are likely to yield material for a cultural history of the period. Persian poetry occupied the next place. In fact, poetry was, in medieval age, the most popular vehicle of literary expression and Muslims, both Indian and foreign, were particularly fond of it. It served the Persians and the Mughuls as an easy vehicle to give expression to their natural love of beauty. There were many in Akbar's days who practised it as a regular profession, while others resorted to it as a means of relaxation, or in pursuit of culture. Owing to the patronage extended to poetry, thousands of poets, both Indians and foreigners, flocked to Akbar's court. Abul Fazl tells us : "Many among them have completed a *diwan* or have written a *masnavi*." The *Ain-i-Akbari* gives the name of fifty-nine topmost Persian poets who had been presented to Akbar and patronised by him. There were fifteen others who, too, were supposed to belong to the first category, but had not been presented ; they had sent their poems to Akbar from various places in Persia. Abul Fazl gives extracts from the poetic compositions of the fifty-nine best poets of Persian. The most important of them was his own elder brother Abul Faizi. Critics considered Faizi to have been the most prominent Indian poet of Persian since the days of Amir Khusrav. He is supposed to rank with Amir Khusrav and Amir Hassan Dehlvi, and was, thus, one of the three Indian poets of Persian whose works were read outside India. Critics hold divergent views about the value of the verse composed by Faizi and other poets at the court of Akbar. According to the historian Smith, they had "no better claims to that title

(poet) than the composer of acrostics for a magazine has. They exercised their perverse ingenuity in torturing words into all sorts of shapes, omitting words with dotted letters, constructing cunningly devised chronograms and such like trivialities. Exercises of the kind, whatever their technical merits may be, certainly are not poetry." (*Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 416). Indian scholars, however, are appreciative of the literary productions of the age. Although one cannot entirely subscribe to the views held by Smith, there is no doubt that the poets of the period writing in Persian paid more attention to language than to thought, and their familiar theme in most cases was love.

Many an author of outstanding merit produced a commentary on the *Quran*. Some of these commentaries possess independent literary value. The most important achievement of the age was translation into Persian of first-rate works of Sanskrit, Arabic, Turki and Greek. As has been mentioned in a previous chapter, Akbar in order to bring about a fusion of the Hindu and Muslim cultures and in order to provide a common literature to the intelligentsia of the land, established at his court a translation department in which were employed high-ranking scholars of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. The department functioned under his personal supervision. Under its auspices a part of *Zich-i-Jadid-e-Mirzai* was translated into Persian by Amir Fatehullah Shirazi. The *Tajak*, a well-known work of Astronomy, and the *Tuzuk-i-Baburi* or, the memoirs of Babur, were translated into Persian. The latter work was translated by Mirza Abdur Rahim Khan Khana. The *Majmul-Buldan*, an excellent work on towns and countries, was translated from Arabic into Persian by Mullah Ahmad, Qasim Beg, Shaikh Munnavvar and others. Abul Fazl translated into Persian many outstanding Sanskrit works, such as the *Kishan Joshi*, the *Ganga Dhar*, the *Mahesh*, the *Mahanand* and others. The *Mahabharata* was rendered into Persian by Naqib Khan, Abdul Qadir Badayuni and Shaikh Sultan of Thaneshwar and was named *Razm-nama*, the book of wars. The same scholars also translated the *Ramayana*, and Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi translated *Atharva Veda*. The *Lilawati*, a Sanskrit treatise on Mathematics, was rendered into Persian by Faizi, and *Rajatarangini*, a Sanskrit history of Kashmir, was translated by Mulla Shah Muhammad of Shahabad. The *Harivansh Purana* was translated by Maulana Sheri and Abul Fazl himself translated the *Panch Tantra* (*Anwar-i-Sahili*) and Faizi

the story of *Nal-Damayanti* into Persian. (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, pp. 104-106).

Among original compositions in Persian historical literature easily occupied the first place. Akbar's inordinate love of history and patronage of historians became responsible for the production of many chronicles describing not only the events of the reign, but also the past history of the country. Among the notable works may be mentioned Abul Fazl's *Akbar-Nama* and the *Ain-i-Akbari*, Nizam-ud-Din Ahmad's *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Gulbadan Begam's *Humayun-Nama*, and Jauhar's *Tazkirat-ul-Waqayat*. Abbas Sarwani produced the *Tahfa-i-Akbar Shahi* alias *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*. Akbar ordered the compilation of the history of 1,000 years of Islam, and Naqib Khan, Mullah Muhammad of Thatta and Jafar Beg were commissioned to write out the work. The book, with an introduction by Abul Fazl, was brought out in time and became known as the *Tarikh-i-Alfi*. Some of the other histories written during the period were Abdul Qadir Badayuni's *Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh*, Ahmad Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afaghana*, Bayazid Sultan's *Tarikh-i-Humayun*, Nurul-Haq's *Zubdat-ul-Tawarikh*, and Azad Beg's *Waqayat*, and *Akbar-Nama* of Shaikh Illahdad Faizi Sarhindi.

Hindi poetry

The reign of Akbar was the golden age of Hindi poetry. The influence exercised by his glorious and victorious reign, his well-known preference for Hindu thought and mode of life, together with his policy of complete religious toleration and recognition of merit, combined with peace, both internal and external, engendered a bracing atmosphere for the development of thought and literature. The result was that many first-rate Hindi poets produced remarkable poetical works which have become classics. The most notable luminaries of Hindi were Tulsi Das, Sur Das, Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, Ras Khan and Birbal. By universal consent of critics the first place among the poets of the age, both Hindi and Persian, belongs to Tulsi Das who, however, was not known to Akbar personally. He spent most part of his life at Banaras, and produced twenty-five works of high standard, the most well-known among them being the herioc poem, *Ramcharitmanas*, popularly known as the *Ramayana*. The epic is divided into seven books, describing the life of Shri Ram Chandra, the king of Ayodhya, who is looked upon by the Hindus as an incarnation of God. Tulsi's next

important work is *Vinaya Patrika* which consists of hymns or songs of prayers. The historian Smith and Sir George Grierson (a first-rate authority on the subject) are of the opinion that the *Ramayana* is a masterpiece and that Tulsi Das was a great genius. According to them Tulsi Das's style varies with the subject and his characters, each of whom has a well-defined personality, live and move with all the dignity of a heroic age. Sir George Grierson goes further and says that "Tulsi Das is the most important figure in the whole of Indian Literature," that he used similes drawn from nature herself and that his description is most natural. The next most important Hindi poet was Sur Das who was even more prolific a writer than Tulsi Das. He is particularly known as the author of *Sur Sagar* and of many songs. No other poet of Hindi, before or after him, had a greater knowledge of child psychology than Sur Das. Some critics looked upon him as even greater than Tulsi Das. He was attached to Akbar's court and was popularly known as the "blind bard of Agra". His father, Ram Das, was also a court poet of Akbar.* Many other Hindi poets graced Akbar's court. His reign was also marked by the advent of Muslim poets in the field of Hindi literature and poetry. In fact, some Muslim poets interpreted Indian culture so successfully that if their names were to be omitted from their composition, it would be indistinguishable from that of the Hindu scholars and poets. In this respect the name of Abdur Rahim Khan Khana stands pre-eminent. Besides being a master of Persian, Arabic and Turki, he was also a first-rate scholar of Sanskrit and a poet of Hindi and Rajasthani. Several hundred verses from his pen have come down to us and are given an honoured place in our poetical selections. In fact, no history of Hindi poetry can be complete without reference to the contribution of that versatile genius. He was a friend of Tulsi Das and had correspondence with him. Another Muslim poet of Hindi was Ras Khan, who was a devotee of Lord Krishna and an author of a large number of first-rate poems which depict Shri Krishna's life in the woods of Vrindaban. Many other courtiers of Akbar, such as Birbal, Man Singh, Todar Mal and others, were lovers of Hindi poetry. Akbar himself loved Hindi poets. He is even stated to have composed some verses in that language. It is not, therefore, surprising that Hindi poetry made a remarkable progress during his reign.

* Some modern scholars of Hindi are of the opinion that this Sur Das was not the author of *Sur Sagar*.

The most important feature of the age was that literary activities were not confined to the court and the nobles. It was essentially a movement of the people, and a large number of scholars and poets of Hindi were found in the countryside and patronised mainly by local landlords and well-to-do public. One has to turn to the pages of *Mishra Bandhu Vinod* and Ram Chandra Shukla's *Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas* to appreciate the spirit of that age which was responsible for the golden period of Hindi poetry.

Painting

Inspite of the Quranic prohibition Akbar loved painting. He used to say that far from making a man irreligious, painting compels a painter to turn to God and seek his assistance to bestow individuality upon his work. Like Akbar, the Persian rulers of the Safawi dynasty were liberal patrons of art and in disregard of the Quranic prohibition, they introduced Chinese or Mongolian painting in Persia, and had Chinese master-artists brought to their land to teach the art to their countrymen. Early Muslim painters confined themselves to the painting of inanimate objects, like trees, mountains, rivers and so forth. The next step was to take to the drawing of birds and animals and then finally to human portraiture. The greatest exponents of this art in Central Asia were Bihzad of Herat and his pupil, Agha Miraq of Tabriz. Bihzad had served Sultan Husain Baiqara and subsequently entered the service of Shah Ismail of Persia. He became responsible for refining the Chinese or Mongoloid style of painting and making it essentially Persian. It was this art that was brought into India by Akbar's orders and introduced into his court. It mingled with the style of Indian painting which had come down from ancient times despite neglect and want of patronage. The tradition of Hindu painting went far back into antiquity and came down to the 16th century through its noble representatives in the caves of Ajanta. Referring to the perfection acquired by the painters of Akbar's court Abul Fazl writes, "This is specially true of the Hindus. Their pictures surpass our conception of things. Few, indeed, in the whole world are found equal to them." (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, page 107). The two styles, Persian and Indian, at Akbar's court began gradually to fuse and in course of time became one. The foreign characteristics of the art gradually dropped out and, eventually, it became purely Indian. The process of this evolution can be seen in the unique copy of the *Tarikh-i-Khandan-i-Timuria* and

a copy of the *Badshahnama* both of which are preserved in the Oriental Khuda Bakhsh Public Library at Patna. Akbar's patronage attracted the best painters to his court. The ablest and most numerous among them were Hindu painters. They were employed to paint the walls of Akbar's capital at Fatehpur Sikri and also to produce albums. Of the seventeen master-painters of Akbar's court no less than thirteen were Hindus who were experts in portrait painting. The most important among these were Daswanth, Basawan, Kesu Lal, Mukand, Madhu, Jagan, Mahesh, Tara, Khem Karan, Sanwla, Haribansh and Ram. Daswanth was the son of a *kahar* and was a palki-bearer. He was fond of painting pictures on the walls and one day Akbar chanced to see him and his art and he at once employed him as a painter and patronised his work. But when Daswanth reached the height of his fame he became insane and committed suicide. Basawan was considered by some critics as a greater painter than even Daswanth. He excelled in the painting of background and the drawing of features, distribution of colours and portraiture painting. Most of the Hindu painters, mentioned in the *Ain-i Akbari*, belonged to the Kayastha, Chitera, Silawat and Khati castes. Some of them were commissioned to illustrate the *Razm-nama*, the Persian translation of the *Mahabharata*.

Akbar created a separate department of painting and Khwaja Abdus Samad, one of the best painters of his court, was placed at its head. Abdus Samad was a Persian who had come from Shiraz. He was given the title of 'Shirin-Qalam' or 'sweet pen'. The emperor personally supervised the department and gave it every possible encouragement. The pieces executed by the court painters were placed before him every week and he rewarded those whose paintings were found excellent. Not only were special grants made to the masters whose paintings were approved by the emperor, but increments in their salaries were also sanctioned forthwith. The artists were enrolled as royal servants and granted *mansabs* in the imperial service. They drew their salaries according to their ranks. Abdus Samad, the head of the department, was a mansabdar of four hundred, but enjoyed much greater influence at the imperial court than his rank entitled him to.

Akbar's interest and patronage led to the establishment of a school of painting which may be called the National Indian School of Painting. Its members were drawn from all parts of India and even from outside. They belonged to various castes and religions.

But they were inspired by one common ideal, namely, the production of works of a high quality, which would meet with the approval of the emperor who was a great connoisseur of the art.

Calligraphy

Associated with the art of painting was the art of calligraphy which was highly prized in India, Persia and China. It was looked upon as a fine art and loved and encouraged by most of the Mughul emperors. Although Akbar was not a lettered man, he had a taste for calligraphy and employed many men skilled in penmanship. They were commissioned with the work of producing beautiful copies of books for his library. Calligraphic writing was collected and preserved in albums like pictorial art. Abul Fazl tells us that eight modes of calligraphy were in vogue at Akbar's court, of which the eighth kind, named Nastaliq, was specially favoured by Akbar. It consisted entirely of curved lines. The most important calligraphist at Akbar's court was Muhammad Husain Kashmiri who was given the title of 'Zarin Qalam'. Some of the other famous calligraphists at the court were Maulana Baqir, Muhammad Amin of Mashad, Mir Husain Kalanki and others.

Closely connected with calligraphy were the arts of artistic binding of books and illuminating them with lovely pictorial designs. Men employed for binding and illuminating the margins and covers of books or illustrating their themes with pictorial drawings were classed as artists. They were as highly valued as painters properly so called. Many dozens of the books produced in that age, enriched by valuable bindings and adorned by costly illustrations, have come down to us and are preserved in various manuscript libraries in the country. They reveal the high standard to which these twin arts had reached under Akbar and his successors.

Music

Like Babur, Akbar was devoted to music. "His Majesty," writes Abul Fazl, "pays much attention to music and is the patron of all who practise this enchanting art." The *Ain-i-Akbari* gives the names of thirty-six first-rate musicians at his court. They were arranged in seven divisions. Each division was required to entertain the emperor for one fixed day in the week. The emperor himself was a skilled musician and no mean performer on the *Naqqara* (cattle drum). He had studied Hindu vocalisation under Lal Kalawant who taught him "every breathing and sound that appertains to the Hindi

language." Early in his reign the emperor had sent for Tansen from Rewa, and raised him to a position of great importance at his court. Tansen was the most notable musician of the age and, according to Abul Fazl, "a singer like him had not been in India for the last thousand years." He had been trained in a school established at Gwalior by Raja Man Singh Tomar (1486-1518). Tansen is said to have invented some new *ragas*. He is even credited with the power of stopping the flow of the Yamuna with his music. Another famous musician was Baba Ram Das, who ranked next only to Tansen. He seems to have been attached to Bairam Khan, who was so pleased with him on one occasion that he conferred upon him a reward of one lakh of *tankas*. Another equally famous singer was Baiju Bawla (sometimes called Birju Bawla), and, though not mentioned in Abul Fazl's list, he was certainly a contemporary of Tansen and Akbar. The guide at Fatehpur Sikri points out his house outside the royal palace and legend and folk tale have preserved the memory of his rivalry with Tansen. Sur Das, son of the celebrated singer Ram Das and one of the greatest Hindi poets of all times, was also a musician of Akbar's court. The emperor's interest in and patronage of music led to great progress in the instrumental as well as the vocal art. At his court Hindu and Muslim music mingled together and became one. To Akbar, therefore, belongs the credit of bringing about a fusion of two diverse systems of music and giving birth to the national Indian music.

Architecture

The Turko-Afghan invaders had brought to this land the ancient vaulted architecture of Mesopotamia, which, before its advent to our country, was greatly modified under the Sassanids and the Abbasid Khalifas and was miscalled by the general name of Islamic architecture. This foreign architectute, when introduced into India, was greatly influenced by the indigenous art which had held the field and reached a remarkable level of excellence. The reasons for this were two-fold, namely, (1) the employment by the Sultans of Hindu masons and architects who unconsciously introduced in the Muslim buildings their own ideas of art, and (2) the fact that early Muslim buildings were constructed out of the materials of Hindu temples and palaces which the conquerors had destroyed. Inspite of the above circumstances, the buildings erected by the Sultans of Delhi and by those of the independent local dynasties that came into existence as a

result of the decline of the Sultanate, were mainly foreign in design and workmanship. It was reserved for Akbar to make a conscious effort to amalgamate the two styles and lay the foundation of the national Indian architecture. He had his own conception of architecture and planned many buildings, such as palaces, mosques, tombs and forts. He established a public works department and his plans were carried out by his able architects and engineers. "His Majesty," writes Abul Fazl, "plans splendid edifices and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay." (Ain 85 on Buildings vide *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 222). Akbar built three gigantic forts, namely, the Agra fort, the Lahore fort and the Allahabad fort. The Agra fort resembles that at Gwalior, which, as Percy Brown points out, must have furnished a model for Akbar's great edifice at Agra. Its circumference is nearly one and a half miles and it has two main gateways, namely, the Delhi gate and the Amar Singh gate. Inside the fort, Akbar built about five hundred buildings of red sandstone. Most of these were pulled down by Shahjahan, whose taste differed from that of his grandfather and who preferred white marble to red sandstone. Some of the buildings of Akbar, however, are still extant. The most important of these are the Akbari Mahal and the Jahangiri Mahal. These two palaces are built after the same pattern. The Jahangiri Mahal abounds in beautifully carved stone brackets which support the stone beams, wide caves and flat ceilings. According to critics, it is so much Hindu in design that it can hardly be out of place at Chittor or Udaipur. The Lahore fort was constructed at almost the same time as the Agra fort. The buildings inside were similar to Jahangiri Mahal at Agra with only one difference that the decoration in Lahore fort is more vigorous and unrestrained than at Agra. Elephants and lions figure in the brackets and peacocks at the friezes from which it may be inferred that Hindu craftsmanship predominated and that the supervision of the Mughul overseers was of a very tolerant character. The Allahabad fort was built at a later date and many of its buildings, including its inner wall, have disappeared. The *Zanana* palace, which is still intact, shows that one of the special features of the buildings in this fort was "the number of distribution of its pillars with their super-structures." The greatest architectural achievement of Akbar, however, was his new capital at Fatehpur Sikri. On a ridge, two miles long and one mile broad, Akbar built a remarkable city, three sides of which were surrounded by a wall and the fourth side by an artificial lake. The walls had

nine gates. The principal entrance was the Agra gate which lay opposite to that city. The most important buildings inside the enclosure are the Record office, Diwan-i-Khas and Diwan-i-Am, the Treasury, the Panch Mahal, Maryam's palace, the Turkish Sultana's palace, the emperor's sleeping chambers and Library, Jodha Bai's palace and Birbal's palace. Outside the enclosure, stands the Jami mosque with its lofty portal known as the Buland Darwaza. Inside the enclosure of the mosque lies the tomb of Shaikh Salim Chishti which is built of white marble. Most of these buildings reveal a mixed style, which is partly Muslim and mainly Hindu in character. The decorative features in some of them are copies of those in the Hindu and Jain temples. The critics consider Diwan-i-Khas to be one of the most remarkable buildings. The Buland Darwaza, which is built of marble and sandstone, is "one of the most perfect architectural achievements in the whole of India." Fatehpur Sikri took about eleven years to complete (1569-1580) and, though it is a deserted place "it still forms a most impressive revelation of a mighty personality." According to Fergusson it is a reflex of the great man who built it. Akbar built several other notable buildings, such as the fort at Attock, a mosque at Amber and one at Merta, some at other places, and his mausoleum at Sikandra, which was designed by him but modified and completed by his son, Jahangir.

Abul Fazl tells us that Akbar built many *sarais* and excavated many tanks and wells for the benefit of the people. He also erected many schools and places of worship. "Everywhere also," writes he, "*sarais* have been built which are the comfort of travellers and the asylum of poor strangers." "Many tanks and wells are being dug for the benefit of the men and improvement of the soil. Schools and places of worship are being founded and triumphal arch of India is annually erected." (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 224).

The new style of architecture representing the combination of the best features of the indigenous and foreign styles, which may be called by the name of Mughul architecture, produced a profound effect on buildings all over the country, including those of the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan. The palaces built during the reign of Akbar at Amber, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Orchha and Datia indicate unmistakable Mughul influence. "It is not difficult," writes Percy Brown, "to see in such buildings how the stone structures of the early Mughuls by the addition of engrailed arches, glass mosaics, painted plaster, guilded gesso, and graffitos were adapted to the more colourful

requirements of the Hindu princes." (*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 548).

Not only civil buildings, but even the Hindu temples could not escape the nationalising effects of Akbar's architecture. While Akbar had freely borrowed from indigenous temple architecture, Hindu temples erected during his reign did not fail to borrow some of the features of the new eclectic style evolved at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. Hindu temples at Vrindavan show clearly that certain of their features are borrowed from the contemporary style of the Mughuls.

Decorative carving was an important feature of Mughul architecture. Carvings in Turkish Sultana's palace at Fatehpur Sikri and Akbar's tomb at Sikandra include representations of plants, flowers, butterflies, sunsets, and the conventional vase designs. Perforated lattice work was equally highly prized. Mosaic and ebony decoration, in which our craftsmen of the Mughul age were proficient, was also lavishly used in the buildings of the time. Glazed tiles and decorative carvings form another special feature of the Mughul architecture. The Turkish Sultana's palace at Fatehpur Sikri is one of the finest specimens of glazed tile work.

Gardens

There existed gardens in India before the advent of the Mughuls ; but they were not geometrically designed and erected pleasances in all cases. Babur brought to our country the new style of gardens which had been developed in Persia and Turkistan and whose chief characteristic was "artificial irrigation in the form of channels, basins or tanks, and dwarf water-falls, so built that the water brimmed to the level of the paths on either side ; and the plan involved a series of terraces on sloping ground, usually numbering eight to correspond with the eight divisions of Quranic paradise : but sometimes seven to symbolise the seven planets." The main pavilion was often built on the topmost terrace and sometimes on the lowest terrace, in order to enable the occupant to have an uninterrupted view of the fountain and water-falls. Akbar laid out gardens in his palaces ; but the most important garden associated with his name is that at Sikandra. In the centre of this garden stands his beautiful mausoleum. The plan of this garden is a four-fold plot (*charbagh*) surrounded by a huge enclosure with four gates in the middle of each of the four walls. The mausoleum, which stands in the centre, is flanked by tanks with central fountains. There are symmetrical

channels of water. The channels and water-courses are paved with fine ceramic ware and are lined with cypress and wild pine trees, palm trees and other beautiful plants.

Akbar laid out fruit gardens also, and he was fond of horticulture. "His majesty," writes Abul Fazl, "looks upon fruits as one of the greatest gifts of the Creator, and pays much attention to them. The horticulturists of Iran and Turan have, therefore, settled here and the cultivation of trees is in a flourishing state." (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, page 64).

Personality and character

Akbar was gifted with an imposing appearance and looked 'every inch a king'. Contemporary writers are unanimous in maintaining that he was possessed of an uncommon dignity and that no one could fail to be impressed with his extraordinary presence. Jahangir gives the following pen-picture of his father. "He was of the middle height, but inclining to be tall ; he was of the hue of wheat ; his eyes and eyebrows were black and his complexion rather dark than fair ; he was lion-bodied, with a broad chest, and his hands and arms long. On the left side of his nose he had a fleshy mole, very agreeable in appearance, of the size of half a pea. Those skilled in the science of physiognomy considered this mole a sign of great prosperity and exceeding good fortune. His august voice was very loud, and in speaking and explaining had a peculiar richness. In his actions and movements he was not like the people of the world, and the glory of God manifested itself in him." (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol, I, pages 33-34).

Another eye-witness, Father Monserrate, who had the privilege of close association with Akbar, writes : "He was in face and stature fit for the dignity of King, so that anybody, even at the first glance, would easily recognise him as the King. His shoulders were broad, and his legs slightly bandy and adapted to riding. His complexion was fair, but slightly suffered with a darker tint. He carried his head slightly inclined to one side, towards the right shoulder ; his brow was broad and open and his eyes sparkled as does the sea when lighted by the sun. His eyelids were heavy as are those of Sarmatians, the Chinese, the Niphonians, and nearly all Asiatics of the more northern regions. His eyebrows were narrow, and his nose was of the middle size and drooping, but had a high bridge. His nostrils were expanded as though he were enraged and, on the left one he

had a wart, which met the upper-lip. He shaved his beard, but not his moustache, following the customs of young Turks before they assume the full costume of manhood...Unlike his forefathers, he did not shave his head, nor did he wear a cap, but bound his hair with a turban, which, they say, he did in imitation of the Indian custom in order to conciliate them. He dragged his left leg slightly, as though he were lame in it, though he had not been injured in the foot. He has in his body, which is very well-made and neither thin and meagre nor fat and gross, much courage and strength. When he laughs he is distorted, but when he is tranquil and serene he has a noble mien and great dignity. In his wrath he is majestic." (Father Monserrate quoted in the *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 155).

Akbar had a very attractive personality and his manners were charming. He was so valorous that he could cut off a lion's neck with one stroke of his sword. Whenever he liked he could easily disregard all inclemencies of climate and weather and endure any kind of fatigue and privations. He was accustomed to hard work and would often walk miles together. He was frank, attentive and witty in conversation. He was so sympathetic to the common people that "he always found time gladly to hear their cases and to respond graciously to their requests. Their little offerings, too, he used to accept with such a pleased look, handling them and putting them on his bosom, as he did not do with the most lavish gifts of the nobles, which with discrete pretence he often seemed not even to glance at." (*Du Jarric*, III, 133, quoted in Smith's *Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 335).

As a gentleman, Akbar left little to be desired. He was a dutiful son, an indulgent brother and father and a loving husband. He was faithful to his friends and did everything to advance their interest. On the death of his intimate friend, Abul Fazl, he wept bitterly and refused to touch food for two days. Although polygamous like other princes, he was thoroughly devoted to his wives. He had faith in human nature and considered it his duty to protect the poor and the helpless.

Akbar used to wear a surcoat or tunic which came down to his knees. It was made of silk and interwoven with gold thread, decorated with embroidered patterns of flowers and foliage and fastened by a large clasp. His turban was so rolled up as to combine Hindu and Muslim styles. It was decorated with costly pearls and other gems. His trousers came down to his heels and were fastened

by knots of pearls. As was the fashion of the time, he had always a dagger in his girdle.

Extremely moderate in his diet, Akbar did not touch meat for more than nine months in the year. In his early days, however, he used to eat meat every day. Even then he was not fond of it. In his later years he gave up meat diet almost altogether. Akbar's habit was to take one substantial meal a day; but his menu consisted of a large number of dishes. He drank wine whenever he liked, though very sparingly indeed. But he was fond of fruit which he looked upon as a gift from Nature. A large variety was produced in the country under his direction and patronage.

Unlike his ancestors and descendants, Akbar was illiterate. He had been a truant child and did not sit down to learn his lessons. There has, in recent years, been a controversy regarding Akbar's illiteracy and some scholars have held that he was not altogether unlettered. But the evidence to the contrary is so overwhelming that one cannot but look upon this theory as nothing more than special pleading. Besides the testimony of the Jesuit missionaries, Monserrate and Jerome Xavier (*vide* J.R.A.S., 1912, p. 194 and of 1888, p. 37), we have the weighty remark of Jahangir that, although his father was illiterate, yet he was so intimately acquainted with various branches of knowledge and so expert in expounding it that no one could imagine that he was an illiterate man. (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* by Rogers and Beveridge, Vol. I, p. 33). Abul Fazl writes : "His holy heart and his sacred soul never turned towards external teaching and his possession of the most excellent sciences together with his disinclination for the learning of letters was a method of showing to mankind.....that the *lofty comprehension of the Lord of the age was not learnt and acquired, but was the gift of God in which human effort had no part.*" (*Akbar-nama*, Vol. I, p. 589). Inspite of these obvious handicaps, Akbar was not an ignorant man in any sense of the term. He had acquired a great deal of knowledge of theology, literature, poetry, philosophy, history and some other sciences, by contact with learned men of all branches of knowledge and by having books read out to him everyday. His memory was so marvellous that he remembered accurately the contents of books read out to him as also the minute details of administrative business. He possessed clarity of thought and fluency in expression. He was fond of discoursing on difficult subjects of philosophy and religion with the great scholars

of the age so eloquently that no one could even imagine that he was illiterate.

Akbar was deeply religious. Sometimes he was assailed by doubt, to remove which he would spend days and nights in study, thought and discussion with learned men. He made a comparative study of different religions, which enabled him to see the shortcomings of Islam. Though he lost faith in the religion of his boyhood and youth, yet he continued to be religious. He prayed four times, morning, noon, evening and midnight, spending considerable time over his prayers. Apart from these, his life was a continuous search for truth. He was fascinated by such metaphysical subjects as the enquiry regarding the relations between God and man, and his happy sayings show his supreme faith in the Almighty. "There is no need," he would often say, "to discuss the point that a vacuum in nature is impossible. God is omnipresent."

"There exists a bond between the Creator and the creature which is not expressible in language."

"Each person according to his condition gives the Supreme Being a Name, but in reality to name the Unknowable is vain."

But Akbar was not a perfect man as Abul Fazl would have us believe. Nor was his personal character altogether above blame. Although the stories of his so-called anxious search for beautiful women in the weekly Mina Bazars held in the palace and the popular legend of his clash with the spirited wife of Prithvi Raj Rathor of Bikaner, who was alleged to have taken out her dagger to defend her honour, are later inventions of the fertile bardic imagination and have no foundation in fact and although the emperor was not a licentious profligate in thought or in deed, he did allow himself latitude, at least in his early years, in the matter of wives, and his harem contained 5,000 women. Making due allowance for presence of female relatives and servants, the number of his queens must have been considerable. In this respect Akbar did not rise above the standard of the age. He was not a teetotaller, and was also familiar with duplicity. At times he lost temper, became subject to violent paroxyms of rage, and inflicted unduly harsh punishments. But such lapses were rare and lasted only for a short time. It must be said in fairness to him that he knew the value of moderation and never became a slave to passion or a prey to any kind of weakness.

A great soldier and general, Akbar was possessed of extraordinary courage and bodily strength. His uncommon power of endurance enabled him to defy inclemency of weather and other physical hardship to which most men succumb. Gifted with originality, organising ability of a high order and a magnetic personality, he could easily enforce discipline among his troops and lead them on to success. His was, therefore, a career of unbroken victories. His motto was : "A monarch should always be intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him. The army should always be exercised in warfare, lest from want of training they become self-indulgent." He thus believed in a policy of aggressive conquest. His army was almost perfect in organisation, and he had made use of a system of warfare that was well-suited to the genius of our people and to the age in which he lived.

As has been shown elsewhere in this book, Akbar made a radical change in the theory of kingship. He was the first ruler in Medieval India to discard the Islamic basis of sovereignty and to lay down the principle that the king was the father of all his people irrespective of caste, race or religion. He thus revived the ancient Hindu ideal and made a conscious effort to bridge the gulf between the ruler and the ruled. He saw the vision of a united India and worked hard to translate it into a reality. He was not satisfied with mere political unity, but desired to strengthen it by cultural, social and economic unity and, if possible, also by religious uniformity. No monarch in that age was inspired by more lofty ideals.

As an administrator and a statesman Akbar stands unrivalled. He was a constructive genius and possessed the rare gift of combining the knowledge of broad original principles of administration with a mastery over minute details of various departments of government. He had the ability of introducing new administrative devices congenial to the genius of the people and suitable for the emergency. He had the courage to discard out-worn pernicious customs, no matter if these were sanctified by tradition, time or religion. His discarding of the Quranic theory of kingship and abolition of the hated taxes like the pilgrims' tax and the *jizya*, which had centuries of religious sanction behind them, are instances in point. Only a ruler of extraordinary ability and strength of character could have thought of disestablishing Islam as the religion of the State or granting a complete religious toleration and equality of status to all religions. In short, Akbar was a very wise and

courageous ruler and statesman who transformed the very basis of his government to suit the circumstances of the age and the welfare of all his subjects.

He was truly a national king. Dr. R. P. Tripathi holds that his ideal of sovereignty was universal, not national. This view is based on the assumption that Akbar's desire was to conquer Central Asia, including Farghana, which formed the kingdom of his ancestors, and to annex it to his empire. It would have been impossible, he argues, to exercise sway over such a hetrogeneous dominion, inhabited by diverse races, without subscribing to the ideal of universal kingship. What Akbar would have done or not done is only a matter of conjecture. We are not concerned with what might have been. The fact remains that he identified himself completely with India and her culture and did his very best to advance her political, social, economic and cultural interests as well as any one who might have belonged to the Indian race and to the religion of the vast majority of her population. He dreamt of a united India, and, by diplomacy and conquest, brought the whole of northern India and a part of the Dakhin under one government and one political system. He established in the whole of his empire a uniform system of administration. The provinces of the empires of Chandragupta Maurya and Samudragupta were an ill-cemented mass held together only by the common bond of allegiance to the emperor. So also were the provinces of the Sultanate of Delhi under Alauddin Khilji, Muhammad bin Tughluq and others. Akbar, on the other hand, gave all the provinces of his empire the same system of administration, the same set of officials, the same administrative methods, the same revenue system and the same coinage. The officers in the provinces bore the same titles and were members of the same imperial service, and the soldiers and officers were transferred from province to province. This gave the empire political and administrative unity of the highest kind possible in that age. Secondly, Akbar attempted to give his empire cultural unity by making Persian the court language and compulsory for all state servants and by providing in that language (either by translation or by original compositions) the best Hindu and Muslim thought, religious as well as secular. It has already been shown that the translation department at his capital rendered into Persian our ancient scriptures, including the *Vedas* and other valuable Sanskrit works on various sciences. Similarly, notable books of Arabic, Turki and even Greek were translated into Persian. All this was

done to provide a common literature for the upper and middle classes of our population. Moreover, most of the fine arts, such as architecture, painting and music, were nationalized and made the common property of the Hindus and Musalmans alike. Thirdly, Akbar sought to strengthen our society by doing away with some of its evils. He tried to abolish *Sati*, child-marrige and old-age marriage. He exercised strict supervision over prostitutes and segregated them. Similarly, he compelled butchers, hunters and washers of dead bodies to reside outside the town. He did not allow circumcision before the age of twelve, and allowed Muslim converts to go back to their original religion if they liked. Fourthly, he regulated trade and industry so as to give economic prosperity to the land. Many kinds of manufacturing industries were encouraged and the country became so prosperous as to dazzle the foreign travellers and ambassadors. Finally, Akbar attempted to bring about a synthesis of the various religions in his empire with a view to doing away with narrow bigotry and religious separatism and strife. Although he did not succeed in this noble task, yet he won the gratitude of a vast majority of his subjects and earned the title of a national king.

Place in history

Akbar's idealism, natural gifts, force of character and concrete achievements entitle him to a high place among the rulers of mankind. His lofty patriotism and intellectual superiority alone easily raised him head and shoulders above all other kings of medieval India. But he was not a mere idealist or a visionary. He was first and foremost a realist who always faced facts and tried to place his feet upon the bed-rock of a situation instead of soaring high in the air. That was the reason why he had great positive achievements to his credit. The rare combination of idealism and realism entitled Akbar to the first place among the Muslim rulers of India and one of the first among the most important and successful monarchs, both Hindu and Muslim, this country had ever had. Akbar's age was an age of great rulers. His contemporaries were Elizabeth of England, Henry IV of France and Abbas the Great of Persia. He was unquestionably superior to them all in more respects than one. The historian Smith is right when he says : "He was a born king of men, with a rightful claim to rank as one of the greatest sovereigns known to history."

22

JAHANGIR (1569-1627)

Early career, 1569–1605

Jahangir was a child of many prayers. Akbar, who had lost all the children of his early youth, ardently desired an heir who should live to inherit his vast empire. He prayed to God, besought the blessings of saints, and walked to the mausoleum of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti at Ajmer and waited on other well-known saints of that time. At last Shaikh Salim Chishti of Fatehpur Sikri promised him three sons. When early in 1569, his Rajput consort, the Jaipur princess, Maryam-uz-Zamani, became in the family way, she was sent to the Shaikh's hermitage where she gave birth on 30th August, 1569, to a child who was named Sultan Muhammad Salim after the Shaikh. Akbar, however, called him Shaikhu Baba. The emperor fulfilled his vow of making his journey on foot to Ajmer and paying his homage to the shrine of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti. The child was brought up with all possible care and affection and, when he grew up, arrangements were made for his education at the new capital, Fatehpur Sikri, where Akbar had erected a lofty palace surrounded by other magnificent buildings. His school-going ceremony took place on November 28, 1573. One after another a series of able tutors were appointed to teach the prince Persian, Turki, Arabic and Hindi, arithmetic, history and geography and other important sciences. But the man who influenced the prince most and moulded his thoughts was Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, a versatile genius, a profound scholar of Arabic, Turki, Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi and, at the same time, a soldier and diplomat of no mean order. Under his guidance, Salim mastered Persian and learnt Turki and Hindi. He learnt, also, to compose verses in Persian and to take delight in Hindi songs. He was taught history and geography and took interest in botany, zoology, music, painting and other fine arts. Physical and military education was not neglected. He was taught to cultivate physical exercises and to handle weapons of offence and defence. In due course he became a fine shot and a mighty hunter.

In conformity with the practice of that age, he was associated with the work of military administration at an early age. During the Kabul campaign of 1581, he was placed in charge of a regiment of troops and, subsequently, employed to conduct independent military expeditions. Likewise, he was given training of a civil administrator. In 1577, he was elevated to the rank of 10,000 in the imperial service and in 1585 promoted to that of 12,000.

At the age of fifteen, Salim was betrothed to his cousin Manbai, daughter of Raja Bhagwan Das of Amber, and their marriage took place on 13th February, 1585. The ceremony was performed both according to Hindu and Muslim rites. Bhagwan Das gave a rich dowry. The off-spring of this union was the ill-fated Khusrav, who was destined to a stormy life and bloody death. Jahangir was devoted to Manbai, who was given the title of Shah Begam and who committed suicide in 1604 owing to her son's unfilial conduct towards her husband. Jahangir was so much affected by this incident that he did not touch food or water for full four days. During her life-time, the prince had married several other wives, the most important of whom was Jagat Gosain or Jodhabai, daughter of Mota Raja Udai Singh. Later on the number of women in his harem swelled to eight hundred. He had become familiar with wine at an early age and now he became addicted to other sensual pleasures.

Salim's revolt, 1599-1604

Salim's loose morals and addiction to wine and other degrading pleasures enraged Akbar who tried to bring him round by advice and threat of punishment. But the estrangement between father and son became deeper due to Salim's ambition of succeeding to his father's dignity and throne without waiting for the latter's death. Some European writers have alleged that the cause of misunderstanding between them was Akbar's apostasy and Salim's championship of the cause of Islam. This is, however, baseless. The prince was not, from any point of view, an orthodox Mussalman and was incapable of championing its cause. The first open estrangement occurred in 1591, when Salim was suspected of poisoning his father at the time of the latter's illness. The suspicion was unfounded. In 1599, when Akbar set out for the Dakhin to reconquer Khandesh, he directed Salim to attack Rana Amar Singh of Mewar ; but instead of proceeding to invade Mewar, the prince loitered at Ajmer and, animated by ambition and corrupted by base associates, he broke

into open rebellion. Having enriched himself by seizing over a crore of cash and other effects belonging to Shahbaz Khan Kamboh, who had died about that time, Salim made a dash for Agra in order to capture the huge treasure, amounting to more than two crores, stored in that fort. He was, however, foiled in his attempt, and therefore, crossing the Yamuna he went to Allahabad and established his court there. He brought a part of Bihar under his control and set himself up as an independent king. He appropriated thirty lakhs of rupees in the treasury of Bihar and appointed an officer to administer that part of the country under his control. When the news of this rebellion reached Akbar at Asirgarh, he sent Khwaja Muhammad Sharif, a playmate and friend of the prince, to Allahabad on a mission of peace. But Salim won over Sharif and appointed him his chief minister. In consequence of the above development, Akbar was obliged to conclude the siege of Asirgarh and hasten to Agra by the middle of 1601. Salim now proceeded towards Agra at the head of 30,000 troops, robbing and plundering the country on the way and declaring that his object was to pay his respects to his father. The emperor ordered the prince to dismiss his followers and return to Allahabad immediately. Fearing the use of force by the emperor and his own defeat, the prince sent assurance of his fidelity and allegiance, whereupon the emperor appointed him governor of Bengal and Orissa. Salim then returned to Allahabad ; but he did not give up his evil intentions, nor sent his men to take charge of Bengal and Orissa. He assumed the title of king and held a regular court, issued farmans and granted titles and jagirs. He made an unsuccessful attempt to procure military assistance from the Portuguese of Goa. Tormented by the rebellion, Akbar summoned Abul Fazl from the Dakhin to take counsel with him. The prince had Abul Fazl murdered by Bir Singh Deva, a rebellious Bundela chief of Orchha, on 19th August, 1602, between Barki Sarai and Antri. Akbar burst into grief and rage as soon as the news was broken to him. He abstained for three days from appearing in public. He railed bitterly against Salim and ordered Bir Singh to be put to death. But the man escaped and lived to enjoy Jahangir's favour.

Although Salim deserved condign punishment, Akbar did not think it politic to take such a step. The emperor's second son, Murad, was already dead and his third son, Daniyal, was visibly dying. His grandsons were too young. The ladies of the harem urged the emperor to forgive and forget. Salima Begam, Jahangir's

step-mother, begged the emperor's permission to go to Allahabad on a mission of peace. Her request was granted. She successfully persuaded the prince to return to his path of duty. The prince came to Agra and was conducted to the presence of his father by his grandmother Mariyam Makani who threw Salim on Akbar's feet. Akbar raised him up and embraced him. Salim presented 770 elephants and twelve thousand gold *mohars*. The emperor not only graciously forgave him but also rewarded him and appointed him heir-apparent.

In order to wean him from his evil associates, the emperor ordered him, on 14th October, 1603, to proceed on the Mewar expedition, which he had failed to accomplish in 1599. Salim proceeded as far as Fatehpur Sikri ; but, feeling himself incompetent to reduce the Rana to submission, he begged permission to return to Allahabad. Akbar complied with the request. At Allahabad the prince again fell into evil ways and again assumed semi-independent state. The emperor was highly enraged and prepared to march to Allahabad to bring the prince round by force. But the illness and death of his mother prevented him from executing his designs. He thought of superseding Salim by the latter's son, prince Khusrav, who was in his seventeenth year and was connected by the closest ties of blood with two of the greatest nobles of the empire. He was son of the sister of Man Singh of Amber and son-in-law of Mirza Aziz Koka. Khusrav was handsome in appearance, agreeable in manners and blameless in his private life. But to designate him heir-apparent without putting Salim to death would have been highly improper. So Akbar gave up the idea. Salim, on his part, felt that his own interest demanded that he should proceed to Agra and submit to his father unconditionally. So he repaired to the court to condole his father on the death of his grandmother. Akbar received him well at the public audience hall ; but, while in the inner apartment, he had him arrested, rebuked him for his unseemly conduct, and slapped him in the face and imprisoned him in a bath room under the charge of a physician. After ten days' confinement, the prince was released and restored to favour. As Akbar's youngest son, Daniyal, died on 10th April, 1604, Salim now remained the only surviving son and heir. Akbar, consequently, desisted from inflicting any more punishment upon him.

Meanwhile, Akbar's health began to fail. He had an attack of dysentery on October 3, 1605, and his condition became worse from day to day. Two parties were formed at court, one supporting

Salim and the other his son, Khusrav. Man Singh and Mirza Aziz Koka favoured the supersession of Salim and the accession of Khusrav ; but they found themselves in a minority. Ram Das Kachhwaha placed a guard of his Rajputs over the royal treasury in order to secure the interest of Salim, and many Muslim nobles, including the Sayyids of Barha, declared for him. On 21st October, the dying emperor had his imperial turban placed on the head of Salim and his sword hung from his girdle, thus recognising him as his successor. On Akbar's death at mid-night on 25-26 October (15-16 old style), 1605, Salim's party found itself stronger than that of Khusrav. It had already exacted two promises from the prince namely that he would protect Islam and forgive Khusrav and his supporters. There was no opposition to his accession which took place on the eighht day of Akbar's death.

Accession, November 3, 1605

Jahangir's coronation ceremony was performed on Thursday, the 3rd November (24th October old style), 1605, in the fort of Agra. He put the crown on his head with his own hands and assumed the title of Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir Padshah Ghazi. He released many prisoners and struck coins in his name. He issued a proclamation of policy in twelve celebrated regulations.

(1) He prohibited the levy of many cesses, called tamgha, mir bahri and by other names.

(2) He ordered the building of sarais, mosques and wells along the roads.

(3) He prohibited the opening of merchants' bales without their knowledge and permission.

(4) If someone died, his property should be given to his heirs. If the deceased person had no heir, the property should be placed in the custody of a State Officer to be used for the erection and repair of public buildings.

(5) He prohibited the manufacture and sale of wine and intoxicating drugs.

(6) Government officers were ordered not to take possession of anyone's house.

(7) He abolished the punishment of cutting of nose and ears.

(8) He forbade the officials to take possession of cultivators' land by force.

(9) No government collector or jagirdar was to inter-marry with the people of his pargana without royal permission.

(10) Government hospitals were to be established in big cities for the treatment of poor people.

(11) He prohibited the slaughter of animals on certain days in the year and two days in every week, that is, Thursday which was Jahangir's accession day, and Sunday, the day of Akbar's birth.

(12) He confirmed all officers and jagirdars in the posts which they had held in Akbar's time.

He caused a gold chain with bells to be hung between the Shah Burj in the Agra Fort and a post on the road near the bank of the Yamuna so as to enable suitors for justice to ring the bell and approach the emperor without the mediation of any officer or servant.

Jahangir confirmed most of the officials, high or low, in the rank and posts which they had held during the last days of Akbar's reign and promoted even some of those with whom he was not on good terms. Abdur Razzaq Mamuri and Khwaja Abdullah, who had deserted him to join Akbar, were allowed to retain their offices and jagirs. Abul Fazl's son, Abdur Rahman, was promoted to the rank of two thousand. Both Man Singh and Mirza Aziz Koka were forgiven for backing up the claims of his son, Khusrav, to the throne; but though they were allowed to retain their posts, they no longer enjoyed the same influence at court which they had done under Akbar. A little later the governorship of Bangal, which was held by Man Singh, who was now recalled to court, was conferred on the new emperor's favourite, Qutub-ud-din Khan Koka. Out of a feeling of gratitude, which was innate in his temperament, Jahangir raised several of his favourites, who were not possessed of special ability, to high posts. To this category belonged Sharif Khan (now appointed grand Wazir), Qutub-ud-din Koka and Bir Singh Deva Bundela of Orchha, all of whom were promoted to high offices. Among the new appointments two were particularly deserving. Ghiyas Beg, who later became famous as the father of Nur Jahan, was appointed diwan or revenue minister and given the title of Itimad-ud-daulah. Zaman Beg was given the title of Mahabat Khan and raised to the mansab of 1,500.

Rebellion of Khusrav, April-May, 1606

Within a few months of Jahangir's accession occurred the rebellion of his eldest son, Khusrav. The emperor had forgiven him for his past conduct on the intercession of his maternal uncle, Raja Man Singh of Amber, but had confined the prince in one corner of the

Agra fort soon after Man Singh's departure for Bangal. Khusrav, who had not forgotten the prospect of his succession to his grandfather's throne and the support of powerful nobles at the court, could not reconcile himself to the indignity to which he was now subjected as a State prisoner and planned to set himself free and make a bid for the throne which had once been almost within his grasp. Accompanied by 350 horse, he slipped out of the fort in the evening of April 6, 1606, on the pretence of a visit to Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandra, and proceeded quickly towards Delhi. On the way, he was joined by Husain Beg Badakhshi at the head of 300 horse and soon his followers swelled to 12,000. Next, the prince intercepted an imperial convoy of one lakh of rupees. Passing by Delhi, he made his way to Lahore and was joined on the way by Abdur Rahman, the diwan of that province. The prince appointed Abdur Rahman his wazir. At Taran Taran the prince obtained the benediction of Guru Arjun, the fifth guru of the Sikhs. When he reached Lahore he found its doors closed and fort put in a state of defence by the governor, Dilawar Khan. Khusrav besieged the fort but could not take it.

Within a few hours of Khusrav's flight, the news leaked to the emperor who made prompt arrangements for pursuing the fugitive, sending a contingent of troops under the command of Shaikh Farid. In order to lose no time, the emperor himself proceeded to Lahore which was being besieged by the prince.

In order to avoid being caught between the two forces, Khusrav left a detachment of his army before Lahore and himself turned back at the head of ten thousand men to give battle to the imperialists. Jahangir's attempt at persuading his son to submit to him peacefully having failed, the parties engaged in a fight on the plain of Bharowal. Inspite of his superior number, Khusrav was badly defeated and escaped with a few trusted friends, like Abdur Rahman and Husain Beg, leaving his box of jewels to be picked up by the imperialists.

Having decided to follow the advice of Husain Beg to capture Kabul and from there invade Delhi to seize the throne Khusrav crossed the Chenab at the ferry of Shahpur ; but he, along with his men, was captured by the imperialists who had been sent in pursuit of the fugitives. Jahangir, who was encamped at Lahore, was delighted to hear the news of the prince's arrest and ordered him to be brought to his camp. On May 1, 1607, Khusrav was brought

handcuffed and enchained before the emperor in a full darbar. The prince, who had Husain Beg on his right and Abdur Rahim on his left, trembled and wept and attempted to prostrate before Jahangir; but he was ordered to stand in his place. The emperor bitterly reproached the rebel prince and ordered him to be imprisoned. Husain Beg and Abdur Rahim, his two principal followers, were sewn in the fresh skin of an ox and of an ass respectively. They were seated on asses with their faces turned to the tail and were paraded through the streets of Lahore. Husain Beg died within twelve hours. Abdur Rahim was, however, pardoned after twenty-four hours suffering. The humbler followers of Khusrav were impaled on a mile-long row of gibbets and he was led on an elephant through the line of gibbets and asked ironically to receive the homage of his followers. His tender heart was shocked and he spent several days in weeping.

Jahangir now turned to Guru Arjun who had bestowed benediction on Khusrav while the latter was on his way from Agra to Lahore. The emperor considered him guilty of supporting a rebel. It is said that Jahangir imposed on Guru Arjun a fine of two lakhs of rupees, which the latter refused to pay. He was consequently put to death. This was an act of indiscretion on the part of the emperor who should not have treated a holy person like Guru Arjun as an ordinary criminal. The Sikh tradition attributes the punishment to Jahangir's religious bigotry and alleges that it was accompanied by barbarous torture. These allegations are without foundation. But the Guru's death estranged his followers against the Mughuls and led to their rebellion in the time of Aurangzeb.

Jahangir was able to suppress the revolt within a month of Khusrav's flight from Agra. He rewarded all those who had contributed to the success of the enterprise and returned to Agra. But the consequences of the rebellion of a near relative, specially a son, were not good, and led to a few risings. The first among them was that of Rai Singh of Bikaner who enjoyed a mansab of five thousand and was one of the high ranking nobles of the Mughul court. He was entrusted with the duty of escorting the royal ladies to the Panjab. He deserted his charge at Mathura, left for Bikaner without permission and raised the standard of revolt. He captured Nagaur, and defied the imperial authority. Rai Jagannath Kachhwaha was sent against him. He defeated Rai Singh and brought him to court. Jahangir pardoned him and restored him to his mansab and dignity.

A petty chief of Bihar, named Sangram, taking advantage of Khusrav's rebellion created strife. He was defeated by Jahangir Quli Khan, governor af Bihar. But the most faithful consequence of Khusrav's rebellion and consequent internal disturbances in the country was the encouragement of the Shah of Persia to make a bid for the fortress of Kandhar.

Kandhar, 1606-1607

Owing to its strategic situation and commercial importance Kandhar was a bone of contention between Persia and India during the medieval age. It was a gate-way to India and a natural base of operations for a Persian or Central Asian invader of our country. Any one in possession of this fortress could easily surprise and capture Kabul. Hence it was considered an extremely important outpost of the government of India. Its commercial importance was no less great. Here gathered merchants from India, Persia, Turkey and Central Asia, and it connected the principal trade routes from India to Central Asia and the countries of Europe. Babur, who was aware of its dual importance, had captured it in 1522. It had, however, passed out of the hands of the Mughuls in 1558 after the death of Humayun, and the Persian monarch entrusted it to the care of Shah Husain Mirza ; but Akbar recovered it in 1594. The death of Akbar and the revolt of Khusrav gave Shah Abbas the opportunity of instigating the chiefs of Khurasan to attack Kandhar ; but Shah Beg Khan, the Indian governor of the fortress, put up a stout defence. Early in 1607 Jahangir sent reinforcements under Mirza Ghazi to relieve the besieged Shah Beg Khan. On the approach of the relieving forces the Persians were struck with terror, raised the siege and retreated to Khurasan. Foiled in this business Shah Abbas disclaimed knowledge of the invasion, rebuked the Khurasani nobles and apologised to Jahangir. He wrote to explain that the restless border tribes had committed the mischief of their own accord and that he had punished them for their foolish audacity. Jahangir, who did not desire to re-open the quarrel, remained silent and accepted the explanation. The affair, thus, came to an end.

The emperor, however, thought it desirable to pay a visit to those parts in order to see that no such invasion occurred again. Leaving Lahore on 27th March, 1607, he entered Kabul on the 4th of June and after eleven weeks' stay there, during which he established contact with important elements in the population of that province

and abolished customs dues which were charged at Kabul, he set out for Lahore in August. On the way, a plot was hatched to assassinate him on the hunting ground and to place his son, Khusrav, on the throne. The chief conspirators, besides Khusrav, were Nur-ud-din, Fateh Ullah, Sharif son of Itimad-ud-daulah, and an eunuch named Itibar Khan. Khusrav's charming manners and attractive address, combined with his blameless private life, had won him about four hundred followers. The conspiracy could not remain secret when such a large number of persons were taken into confidence. The secret leaked out, and Khurram, who got scent of it, informed Jahangir. An enquiry was immediately held and a number of letters of Itibar Khan were seized. One of the conspirators, named Mirza Muhammad Uzbeg, on being promised amnesty, revealed the entire plot. The emperor generously forgave the rank and file among the conspirators ; but put four of the ring-leaders, Nur-ud-din, Itibar, Sharif, and Bedagh Turkman to death. Khusrav was blinded, but his sight was not permanently injured. After a short stay at Lahore, Jahangir returned to Agra on March 22, 1608. Khusrav was kept a prisoner in the fort. Moved by compassion, the emperor ordered his physicians to heal the vision of Khusrav's eyes. One of the eyes regained its vision. The other, however, remained uncured.

Nur Jahan

In May 1611, Jahangir married a widow named Mehr-un-nisa who was given the title of Nur Mahal, subsequently changed into Nur Jahan, and who began exercising unbounded influence on the emperor and the administration of the empire. She was the daughter of Ghiyas Beg, a Persian adventurer in Akbar's service who was honoured with the title of Itimad-ud-daulah. A romantic legend has grown round the personality of Nur Jahan. Later writers in describing her early career have related that her parents, being forced by adversity, had to leave their home in Persia and to seek their fortune in India. They started on a perilous journey without adequate means of support on the way. The couple were in great want and their distress was heightened by the fact that Ghiyas Beg's wife was in an advanced state of pregnancy. On the way, the weary half-starved lady gave birth to a daughter. Being too weak to carry the baby, they left her under a tree and resumed their journey. They had not gone far when the mother, feeling her life unbearable without her baby, forced her husband to return to the place to pick up

the child. To their surprise they found a cobra coiling round her body and sheltering her from the sun. Ghiyas shouted aloud to scare away the cobra and picked up the child. With great difficulty they reached Lahore, where they found an old friend who introduced Ghiyas to Akbar. The emperor employed him in an ordinary capacity; but being a man of ability and intelligence, Mirza Ghiyas soon rose to be the master of the royal household. Mehr-un-nisa, the daughter, meanwhile, grew up to be a charming girl. Peerless in beauty and unrivalled in feminine accomplishments, she aspired to conquest of the heir-apparent, prince Salim, who ardently desired to marry her; but Akbar would not agree to such an alliance. Mehr-un-nisa was, therefore, married to Sher Afgan, a Persian adventurer, like her father, who had migrated to India and entered Akbar's service. When Jahangir became king, he contrived to kill Sher Afgan and obtain possession of Mehr-un-nisa. He succeeded and had her brought to court. He married her four years later and raised her to the status of his chief queen.

This romantic tale lacks confirmation in sober history which says that Mirza Ghiyas Beg's father, Khwaja Muhammad Sharif, was the Wazir of Sultan Beghar Begi of Khurasan, a province of Persia, and a man of noble birth and liberal education. On his death, in 1587, his family lost its importance and suffered from adversity. His son, Mirza Ghiyas Beg, resolved to seek his fortune in India and, accompanied by his two sons, one daughter and his pregnant wife, left for Lahore. On the way he lost most of his money and baggage. He was, however, supported by Malik Masud, the leader of the caravan. At Kandhar his wife gave birth to a daughter who was named Mehr-un-nisa. Ghiyas Beg was introduced to Akbar by the merchant, Malik Masud, and was admitted into the imperial service. He was a man of learning and culture and soon made a mark in life. He was promoted to the rank of a mansabdar of three hundred and appointed diwan of Kabul in 1595. Mehr-un-nisa, who had grown up meanwhile, was given in marriage to Ali Quli Istajlu who was a Persian refugee in the service of Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, but was subsequently taken in the royal service. In 1509, when Prince Salim was deputed to lead an expedition against Mewar, Ali Quli was placed on the prince's staff. He killed a tiger single-handed and was given the title of Sher Afgan by the prince. Sometime after Salim's revolt, Sher Afgan deserted to Akbar. When Jahangir became king, he forgave Sher Afgan for his past conduct and appointed him

faujdar of Burdwan in Bangal and granted him a jagir there (1605). Sher Afgan was suspected of treasonable designs and the emperor directed the new governor of Bangal, Qutub-ud-din Khan, who had succeeded Raja Man Singh in August 1606, to send Sher Afgan to court and, in case of disobedience, to punish him. In response to the governor's summons Sher Afgan, accompanied by two servants, reached Qutub-ud-din's camp on April 9, 1607. He was immediately surrounded by the governor's troops. Realizing the danger he was in and the indignity to which he was subjected, he angrily enquired of Qutub-ud-din as to why he was treated in that manner. As Qutub-ud-din advanced to explain the matter, the infuriated Sher Afgan struck the governor with his sword. Qutub-ud-din's followers fell upon Sher Afgan who was cut to pieces. But before this, Sher Afgan had given a mortal blow to Ambar Khan, one of the governor's retainers. Both he and the governor died within twelve hours.

The news of Qutub-ud-din's death filled the emperor with rage. He wrote in his diary that Sher Afgan was sent to hell "and it is to be hoped that the place of this black-faced scoundrel will always be there." Jahangir had Sher Afgan's widow and daughter, Ladli Begam, brought to court. The widowed lady was appointed a lady-in-waiting to Salima Begam, Akbar's widow. Jahangir chanced to see her in one of the Nauroz festivals in March 1611, and fell in love with her. He married her in May 1611.

Jahangir's relations with Nur Jahan

The circumstances of the death of Sher Afgan and the emperor's marriage with this remarkable lady have been the subject of controversy, and historians have held divergent views about the incidents leading to them and Jahangir's personal share in them. Dr. Beni Prasad holds that as a prince he had never seen Mehr-un-nisa, that Akbar had not forbidden their marriage, that Jahangir had no hand in the murder of Sher Afgan and that he for the first time saw Mehr-un-nisa in March 1611. (*Jahangir*, page 152). The reasons given by the learned historian of Jahangir in support of his theory are :

(1) No contemporary Persian source supports the view that Jahangir as a prince had desired to marry Mehr-un-nisa and that Akbar had refused him permission. Nor does any contemporary Persian authority charge Jahangir with contriving the murder of Sher Afgan.

(2) None of the contemporary European travellers or mission-

aries has anything to say in support of the traditional story, although these foreigners were anxious to seize upon rumours of any and every scandal connected with the members of the royal family.

(3) One could not think of any motive why Akbar would have forbidden Salim to marry Mehr-un-nisa. Such marriages were common enough in those days.

(4) If Akbar had really done so, he would not have been unwise enough to place Sher Afgan on the staff of Prince Salim in 1599. If Salim had looked upon Sher Afgan as his rival in love, he would not have forgiven him (Sher Afgan) for his descrition and promoted him to a high post.

(5) The appointment of Qutub-ud-din as governor of Bangal was made in order to prevent Man Singh, with whom the new emperor was not on good terms, from commanding the resources of an important province and from exercising influence in the empire. It was not done to procure Mehr-un-nisa for the emperor. A similar step had been taken against Aziz Koka, another disaffected nobleman, a short time before Raja Man Singh's transfer.

(6) A high-souled lady of Nur Jahan's strong character would never have consented to marry Jahangir had she been convinced of his complicity in the murder of her former husband.

(7) It was natural that Sher Afgan's widow should be removed to court where her father and brother held employments. Her appointment as a lady-in-waiting on Salima Begum was also perfectly unexceptionable.

Dr. Ishwari Prasad, on the other hand, holds that it is not improbable that Jahangir as a prince loved and wanted to marry Nur Jahan, and that probably he had a hand in the murder of Sher Afgan too. He adduces the following arguments in support of the above view :

(1) The evidence furnished by Dr. Beni Prasad in support of his theory of the emperor's innocence is of a negative character and is, therefore, not strong enough to disprove the "positive assertions" of the later Indian historians who were "in a better position to state the truth in a matter like this than their predecessors."

(2) There was no definite charge against Sher Afgan who was only suspected of sedition and Qutub-ud-din was directed to punish him if he "showed any futile seditious ideas". Hence, writes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "our suspicions are confirmed by the suddenness with which his arrest was attempted."

(3) It is suspicious that Jahangir, who was fond of relating trivial affairs about his life, omits altogether to record the circumstances of his marriage with Nur Jahan. He mentions Nur Jahan's name for the first time three years after his marriage with her.

(4) It was strange that Mehr-un-nisa was brought to court by the emperor's orders and placed in the charge of the dowager queen Salima Begam in the imperial harem, while her father and brother were living at the capital and could have easily taken charge of her. Such a thing was never done in the case of the families of other nobles and officers who were charged with sedition.

(5) Jahangir, while a prince, seems to have loved Nur Jahan as mentioned by a contemporary Dutch writer, De Laet, in his famous work, *Description of India and Fragment of Indian History*. The reasons why Jahangir did not marry Nur Jahan immediately after Sher Afgan's death were that Jahangir was anxious to lull the suspicion about the circumstances leading to Sher Afgan's death and also not to provoke Nur Jahan unnecessarily. Dr. Ishwari Prasad, therefore, concludes that "the circumstances of Sher Afgan's death are of a highly suspicious nature although there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the emperor was guilty of the crime." (*A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, pp. 465-467).

The main issues underlying this important episode are : firstly, whether Jahangir as a prince wanted to marry Mehr-un-nisa and was prevented from doing so by his father and, secondly, whether he had any hand in the murder of Sher Afgan. As regards the first, Dr. Beni Prasad's observation that "one can hardly think of any motive which would prompt Akbar to forbid a marriage between Mehr-un-nisa and Salim" does not stand the test of criticism. We know from Abul Fazl that Akbar did forbid the marriage between Salim and the daughter of the nobly-born Zain Khan Koka and allowed it only when he saw that the prince's "heart was immoderately affected." (*Akbar-nama*, Vol. III, p. 1058). In the present case there was a definite reason why Akbar would not give his consent. Mehr-un-nisa had already been betrothed, as De Laet says, to Sher Afgan. That there was love between the two is also clear from the testimony of the above contemporary Dutch writer. "He (Jahangir) had been in love with her," writes De Laet, "when she was still a maiden during the life-time of Achbar (Akbar) ; but she had already been betrothed to the Turk Cheer Affeghan (Sher Afgan), and hence his father would not allow him to marry her, although he never entirely lost his love

for her." (*Description of India and Fragment of Indian History*, p. 181). This independent testimony of a writer who had no reason to be biased against the emperor, supports the later Muslim historians. This is confirmed by a contemporary Persian work, recently discovered by Prof. Askari of Patna, which says that Salim had made a criminal assault on Mehr-un-nisa who appealed to Akbar for justice. The emperor forbade her marriage with Salim. Our knowledge of Jahangir's personal character, such as, his falling in love with Zain Khan Koka's daughter inspite of his having already married many ladies, lends weight to the theory of his early love for Nur Jahan.

With regard to the allegation that Jahangir had Sher Afgan murdered, there exists no definite and unimpeachable contemporary evidence. Nor can one agree that Man Singh was removed from the governorship of Bangal so that the emperor's design could be easily executed. But at the same time there was no formulation of definite charge against Sher Afgan who was kept in the dark about his offence and was not given an opportunity to clear himself. Moreover, the suddenness with which his end was sought to be encompassed, the method employed to secure the object and the rancour which Jahangir displayed against the victim together with his omission of a mention of Nur Jahan in that connection make the episode highly suspicious. As Dr. Ishwari Prasad hints, if the love theory is correct, the motive for Sher Afgan's murder is clear.

There remains one more question to answer. If Jahangir was so anxious to obtain possession of Nur Jahan, why did he not marry her in 1607, when she was brought to court ? Why did he wait for four long years and marry her in 1611 ? It will be remembered that Nur Jahan was brought to the court and placed in charge of Salima Sultana Begam, who was Jahangir's step-mother and very kind and friendly to him. It was she who had brought about a reconciliation between Akbar and Jahangir when the latter had, as a prince, rebelled against his father. We know that ladies in the Mughul harem were clever match-makers. Therefore, while living with Salima Sultana Begam, Mehr-un-nisa was already in the possession of the emperor. The emperor's marriage with her was postponed for four years in order to lull public suspicion. This explains why Jahangir took the precaution of not mentioning the name of Nur Jahan till three years after their marriage.

Character of Nur Jahan

At the time of this marriage Jahangir was about to complete

his forty-second year, while Nur Jahan was thirty-four years of age. She still retained, and continued to do so for years together, the beauty and freshness of her early youth. She kept excellent health and was possessed of considerable physical strength. Her loveliness was heightened and improved by artificial toiletting and ornamentation. Nur Jahan was endowed with a strong intellect and quick understanding. She was highly educated and was fond of poetry, music and painting. She composed verses in Persian. She had an inventive brain and devised new dresses, ornaments and styles of fashion and decoration. The fashion that she introduced continued to govern society till the reign of Aurangzeb.

Nur Jahan was pre-eminently social and generous. She was a friend of the poor and the oppressed. She had made it a rule to defray the expenses of the marriages of orphan girls and to distribute considerable charity every day. She possessed a man's brain and ambition. It was not difficult for her to master intricate political and administrative problems. She loved to dominate every situation and everybody she came in touch with. She was full of courage and bravery and never lost her balance or equanimity of temper. In fact, the greater the danger, the greater was her fortitude and resourcefulness.

Nur Jahan enjoyed great influence and authority. In 1613, she was elevated to the rank of Padshah Begam or the first lady of the realm. In that capacity she became the head of the female society of the capital and the mistress of the imperial household. She was so fond of power that she not only participated in the administration, but attempted to concentrate authority in her hands. Jahangir, who was gradually becoming accustomed to ease and sloth owing to age and indifferent health, was not averse to delegate his authority to the queen who was intelligent and hard-working and who loved him with all the intensity of her full-blooded nature. Sometimes she appeared in *Jharokha darshan* and transacted business in the open; even her name was engraved on some of the coins. Within a few years of her marriage Nur Jahan organised a party of her own and took the reins of government in her hands. The party, known as Nur Jahan Junta, consisted of herself, her parents, her brothers and prince Khurram who was the husband of her niece. Nur Jahan's mother, Asmat Begam, an educated and intelligent lady of balanced views, acted as her counsellor. Herself a woman of cultured taste and responsible for the invention of the *itr* of roses, she exercised

steadying influence on her ambitious and restless daughter. Nur Jahan's father, Itimad-ud-daulah, was an able administrator, and her brother, Asaf Khan, a financier and diplomat of note. They were hardworking and talented men, who became the pillars of Nur Jahan's party. Prince Khurram, entitled, subsequently, Shah Jahan, was married to Asaf Khan's daughter Arjumand Banu Begam. He was patronised by Nur Jahan in the early days of her power (1611-1622).

Effect of Nur Jahan's influence

Nur Jahan exercised healthy influence upon her husband. She looked after the emperor with unparalleled care and devotion. It was owing to her influence that Jahangir reduced the number of his daily cups and restrained himself from excessive drinking to which his two younger brothers had succumbed. She relieved him of much of the drudgery of state administration and care and anxiety which must always accompany all rulers and administrators. She successfully enhanced the splendour of the Mughul court and ably seconded the efforts of her husband in patronising learning and arts. She distributed a great deal of charity and, in more than one respect, extended protection and patronage to women. Thus her influence over Jahangir was good and benefitted especially the poor and the needy and the votaries of letters and arts.

On the other hand, her influence in political and administrative affairs and high matters of State policy was definitely injurious. Throughout her ascendancy she displayed an inordinate love for power and fondness for indulging in party politics. From 1611 to 1622, she was the leader of the famous Nur Jahan Junta which monopolised power and shut out all those who were opposed to this party from power and influence at court. She raised her father, brother and other relatives to high posts in the empire. During this period she supported Khurram whom she raised to a pinnacle of prestige and glory. Nothing was denied to the prince, and his succession to the throne was considered a certainty; but when the most masterful queen gave her daughter, Ladli Begam, by Sher Afghan in marriage to prince Shahryar, she began to back up her son-in-law who was popularly known as *Nashudni*, that is, a good for nothing fellow. She reduced Khurram to dust and drove him into rebellion in self-defence. The result was that Nur Jahan's interference in the affairs of the State convulsed the empire in a civil war. Her love of power and

disregard of loyal services rendered to the State by top-ranking officials, and her suspicion towards those who differed from her brought about an estrangement between the queen and some of the most capable and devoted servants of the Mughul throne. Mahabat Khan, who had reached the position of Amir-ul-umra by dint of meritorious services, was driven to raise the standard of revolt and to arrest the emperor, as he felt that if the imperious queen were allowed to have her own way, he would perish along with the members of his family. Possessed as she was of womanly vanity and love of theatrical display of sovereignty, her influence in the court and in the empire produced an unhealthy result. It was the desire of all and sundry to please her by offering her rich presents which gave rise to bribery and corruption. She was, after all, a woman and could not personally supervise high state transactions. This lack of personal touch bred inefficiency, intrigue and demoralisation.

War and treaty of peace with Mewar

With all his efforts Akbar could not conquer the whole of Mewar. Rana Pratap was able to recover a considerable portion of his lost territory before his peaceful death in 1597. His son and successor, Amar Singh, though not gifted with his father's indomitable spirit and undying love for freedom, was, nevertheless, a brave soldier and continued his ancestral policy of resistance to the Mughul aggression. Several expeditions sent by Akbar during the last days of his reign met with failure on account of the supineness of his commanders and the stiffness of the opposition offered by the Sisodias.

On his accession, Jahangir, in pursuance of his father's policy of imperialism which aimed at the conquest of the entire country, deputed, in 1605, his second son, Parwez, at the head of 20,000 horse to reduce Rana Amar Singh to submission. Asaf Khan Jafar Beg, who was promoted to the rank of 5,000 and appointed wazir, was directed to assist the prince as his adviser, and other notable officers were ordered to co-operate with him. Sagar, an uncle of Rana Amar Singh, who had deserted his nephew and lived as a pensioner at the Mughul court, was also required to accompany the expedition. Amar Singh bravely defended his territory and fought a tough battle at the pass of Dewar which proved to be indecisive. Both sides claimed victory. The imperialists mercilessly ravaged the plain in the vicinity of Dewar, but they could proceed no further and were recalled on account of Khusrav's rebellion. Before quitting, they installed

Sagar as Rana at Chittor, in order to create dissension among the Rajputs.

Two years later, in 1608, Jahangir sent another force consisting of 12,000 horse, 500 Ahadis, 2,000 musketeers, 60 elephants and 80 pieces of small artillery, under Mahabat Khan, to subdue the Rana. The Khan displayed great energy, ravaged the Rana's territory and compelled him to seek shelter in the hills ; but he could make no headway against the forest-covered hills and valleys of Mewar. In 1609, he was recalled and Abdulla Khan was appointed to take charge of the expedition. Abdulla attacked the hills of Mewar, but failed to capture the Rana. He defeated prince Karan in an engagement, but was, in turn, badly beaten by the Rajputs at Ranpura, the northernmost key-point of Mewar. He was replaced by Raja Basu, who, too, failed to produce an impression upon the Rana and was, therefore, replaced by Mirza Aziz Koka. In 1613, Jahangir personally moved to Ajmer in order to be near the scene of action and to exert pressure on the enemy. The supreme command of the Mewar army was now entrusted to Prince Khurram. The campaign began early in 1614 with vigour. But soon there were differences of opinion between the Prince and Aziz Koka. Consequently, the latter was recalled. Khurram, who had now the sole charge of the invading army, "conducted his campaign with consummate ability, ruthless severity and extraordinary good fortune." He ravaged the Rana's territory, destroyed and burnt villages, towns and gardens and demolished temples. He cut off all supplies in order to starve out the Sisodias in their mountainous retreats. Though reduced to great straits, the Rajputs displayed undaunted heroism and made repeated attacks on the enemy. In the constant struggle both sides suffered heavily ; but the Rajputs suffered greater losses than the Mughuls on account of a famine and pestilence. The Rana's followers now began gradually to desert him. His nobles counselled peace. Prince Karan also advised the same course. The resources of the tiny Mewar were exhausted and it was not possible to prolong any futher the struggle with the great empire whose resources in men and money were infinitely superior. Accordingly Amar Singh opened negotiations with Khurram, who offered a cordial reception to the Rana's agents, Shubh Karan and Hari Das, and sent them with his own secretary to the imperial camp at Ajmer. Jahangir was happy to accept the terms proposed by the Rana and issued a

'farman' impressing upon it the mark of his own palm and authorised prince Khurram to conclude a treaty.

Rana Amar Singh met prince Khurram and presented him a valuable ruby and some other articles, including seven elephants and nine horses. Khurram received him cordially, embraced him and, seating him by his side, honoured him with rich presents. After the Rana's departure, prince Karan paid a visit to Khurram and was similarly received and honoured. Thus a treaty of peace was concluded between the Rana and the emperor in 1615. Its terms were:

(1) The Rana recognised Jahangir as his suzerain.

(2) The emperor restored to the Rana all the territory, including Chittor, that had been seized by the Mughuls since the time of Akbar.

(3) The fort of Chittor was not to be fortified and not even to be repaired.

(4) The Rana was not obliged to attend the imperial darbar; but his son was to represent him and to assist the emperor with a contingent of troops.

(5) Unlike other Rajput chiefs, the Rana was not required to enter into a matrimonial alliance with the Mughul ruling family.

The treaty is a landmark in the history of the relations between Mewar and Delhi. No ruler of the Sisodia dynasty ever before openly professed allegiance to any Mughul emperor. The treaty of 1615 for the first time brought about the end of a long-drawn struggle between the two States. Jahangir and his son, Khurram, deserve credit for dictating extremely lenient terms to their foe who had fought against them and their great ancestors Akbar and Babur for over three quarters of a country. The emperor also deserves credit for adopting a most conciliatory policy and abstaining from all interference in the internal affairs of Mewar which proved useful to both parties. The Rana of Mewar hereafter remained loyal to the Mughul throne, till Aurangzeb, by his thoughtless policy, drove Raj Singh into an open rebellion. Some writers have found fault with Rana Amar Singh for not continuing the struggle and submitting to his hereditary enemy. The charge, however, is baseless. It was impossible for a tiny state like Mewar to continue the unequal struggle for an indefinite period. Mewar had to submit sooner or later, as the resources of the Mughul empire were infinitely superior. Mewar's interests required peace, and by the treaty of 1615 she got peace with honour. She retained her internal sovereignty, and all

the scruples of her ruling family were respected by the victor. The Rana only nominally recognised the Mughul suzerainty. It would have been unwise for Amar Singh to have thrown away this golden opportunity of bringing the much needed peace to the distracted land.

War in the Dakhin

Jahangir adopted his father's policy of conquering the whole of India and bringing it under the rule of his dynasty. His Dakhin policy was, therefore, a continuation of that of Akbar, who, following the ideals of the ancient Hindu kings, treated the north and south as indivisible parts of one country with a common culture and interest, and attempted to acquire the Dakhin by peaceful means, and failing that, by war. On his death, in 1605, the Mughuls possessed the whole of Khandesh and a part of Ahmadnagar. It was Jahangir's task to attempt the conquest and annexation of the rest of Ahmadnagar and, if possible, of the two remaining independent states of Bijapur and Golkunda. In 1608, he directed the Khan Khana to conquer the Dakhin and despatched him at the head of 12,000 picked cavalry. Inspite of great exertion, Khan Khana could make little progress in the campaign. He was opposed by a great military genius of the calibre of Malik Ambar, an Abyssinian by birth, who had risen to be the prime minister of Ahmadnagar. This able man had consolidated the truncated state of Ahmadnagar by a wise system of administration and liberal revenue policy and had, thus, won the goodwill of the people. He had the wisdom to employ a considerable number of Marathas in the Nizamshahi army and to encourage them to develop the guerilla system of warfare in which they were adepts and which suited the nature of the country and the genius of the people inhabiting it. Thus strengthened, the Nizamshahi government put up a brave defence against the invaders. Khan Khana was unable to maintain the morale of the Mughul troops. In order, therefore, to secure harmony and strengthen the army, Jahangir entrusted the nominal command to prince Parwez and appointed Asaf Khan as his guardian. The prince was appointed governor of Khandesh and Barar and was sent early in 1610; but he did not fare better than Khan Khana and achieved nothing during his several years' leadership in the Dakhin. One after another some of the important Mughul commanders, such as Khan-i-Jahan Lodi and Abdulla Khan, were tried, but to no purpose. Malik Ambar's Maratha guerillas evaded open pitched battles. They hung on the

skirts of the Mughul army, lured it away to a place of ambush, cut off its supplies and fell on it at a convenient opportunity. These tactics, to which the Mughuls were unused, wore them out and undermined their morale. The commanders indulged in mutual accusations and thwarted the plans of their general.

In 1611, the Mughuls made a grand attempt to encircle Ahmadnagar. Abdulla Khan was to march on it from the side of Gujarat, while Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, Man Singh and Amir-ul-Umra to move from the side of Barar and Khandesh and attack simultaneously; but the scheme failed, as Abdulla Khan marched quickly towards his objective without waiting for his colleagues to proceed from Barar and Khandesh. Malik Ambar's guerillas fell on him and drove him back to Gujarat with severe losses. Jahangir was indignant. He reprimanded Abdulla Khan and reappointed Khan Khana to the Dakhin command. The Khan Khana resumed operations in 1612 and defeated the Dakhinis ; but the Mughul victory was not decisive and dissension continued to hamper them as before.

Anxious to wash off the stain of a continued Mughul failure against Malik Ambar, Jahangir decided, on the advice of the Nur Jahan Junta, to transfer Prince Parwez to Allahabad and place prince Khurram in charge of the Dakhin. Early in 1616 he was granted the title of Shah Sultan and given leave to set out for Ahmadnagar. The Emperor himself moved to Mandu with all his court in order to be near the scene of warfare and, thus, exert pressure by his presence. Prince Khurram reached Burhanpur in March 1617, and at once opened negotiations with Malik Ambar. Overawed by the superior force, Malik Ambar accepted the terms and ceded all the territory of Balaghat, which he had recently seized from the Mughuls. He also surrendered to the Mughuls the fort of Ahmadnagar. King Adil Shah waited in person on prince Khurram with presents worth sixteen lakhs of rupees. Jahangir confirmed the terms and the treaty of 1617 was signed. The Mughul court hailed the peace as a great achievement and exaggerated the measure of Khurram's success. The Nur Jahan Junta celebrated the occasion with pomp and magnificence, as if the prince had won a great victory. Jahangir was overjoyed and conferred on Khurram the high-sounding title of Shah Jahan. The fact, however, was that Khurram had taken advantage of Abdulla Khan's partial success and exerted pressure on the enemy by his superior force and patched up a temporary truce. Malik Ambar was not beaten ; within two years he was to raise his head again.

The treaty of 1617 was brushed aside by Malik Ambar in 1620 when he formed a league with Bijapur and Golkunda and launched an attack on Khan Khana, and besieged him in the fortress of Ahmadnagar. The imperialists, though successful in pitched battles, were powerless before the guerilla fighting of the Dakhinis and were driven back to take shelter in Burhanpur. The Dakhinis carried on raids as far as Mandu. In response to the repeated appeals of Khan Khana, the emperor directed Shah Jahan to proceed to the south and punish the audacious Malik Ambar ; but, as the seige of Kangra was proceeding in the Panjab, the prince could not start for the Dakhin for some time. He insisted that his elder brother, Khusrav, should be placed in his custody. When this request was granted, Shah Jahan took leave of his father at Lahore for the Dakhin. From Ujjain he despatched five thousand cavalry under Abdul Hassan and another contingent under Bairam Beg to drive away the Marathas from the vicinity of Mandu. This was done without difficulty. The Marathas were pursued as far as Khirki near Ahmadnagar, the new capital of the Ahmadnagar kingdom. Shah Jahan's men now pushed on to Ahmadnagar itself in which the Mughul garrison was still holding out. When the Mughuls reached Patan, Malik Ambar offered his submission. At about the same time the Dakhinis had raised the siege of Ahmadnagar. Shah Jahan was anxious to bring the Dakhin campaign to a speedy conclusion. Owing to Nur Jahan's changed attitude towards him, he hurriedly concluded peace in 1621. The Dakhinis ceded all the imperial territory which they had seized after the peace of 1617, besides yielding some adjoining territory of the revenue of fourteen lakhs of rupees. The States of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda paid to the emperor a tribute of twelve lakhs, eighteen lakhs and twenty lakhs respectively.

The peace proved to be another feather in Shah Jahan's cap. His reputation was greatly enhanced. In August 1621, he received the news of his father's illness. A little later he contrived to bring about the death of his elder brother, prince Khusrav, by commissioning a man, named Raza, to strangle him to death, while he himself went out on a hunting excursion to avoid suspicion. A few days after the incident he reported to his father that Khusrav had died of an attack of colic. Jahangir was grieved and the whole country mourned the passing away of the prince who was possessed of great qualities of head and heart and was deservedly popular among all classes of people. The emperor, however, took no steps to punish the guilty.

Loss of Kandhar, 1622

As we have seen, the impregnable fortress of Kandhar was a bone of contention between the two mighty empires of India and Persia which were jealous rivals. Though at peace, each endeavoured to lull the suspicion of the other so as to achieve its object. The policy of the Shah of Persia was to cajole and flatter Jahangir and to attack and capture Kandhar as soon as the Indian emperor was found off his guard. The Persians made such an attempt in 1606, but failed to capture Kandhar. Realising that naked force would not help him, Shah Abbas sent an ambassador, early in 1611, to Agra with many a rich present and a flattering letter of condolence on the death of Akbar and congratulations on the accession of Jahangir. This mission was followed by a series of others, all having the same object, namely, putting Jahangir off his guard and attacking at a convenient opportunity. The second mission came in 1615, the third in 1616 and the fourth in 1620. Towards the end of 1621, the Shah, who must have been duly informed of the break up of the Nur Jahan Junta and the growing estrangement between Nur Jahan and Shah Jahan, sent a large force for the capture of Kandhar. The siege actually began early in 1622 and there spread a rumour that another Persian army was coming to attack Thatta. Jahangir was then recouperating in Kashmir. He directed Shah Jahan, who was then in the Dakhin, to proceed to the relief of Kandhar ; but the prince, who was already meditating rebellion against his father, was not in a mood to comply with the imperial orders. The fortress fell after forty-five days' siege and was occupied by the Persians. Shah Abbas sent an ambassador to Jahangir with a letter justifying the siege and capture of Kandhar on the ground that it was part of the Persian territory. The letter expressed the hope that the two empires would remain friendly. Jahangir accused the Shah of treachery and meanness and ordered prince Parwez to recover the fortress. This could not be done successfully owing to Shah Jahan's rebellion.

Shah Jahan's rebellion

Nur Jahan's party, which had been governing the empire since 1612, began to show signs of disruption towards the end of 1621. Jahangir had wrecked his strong constitution by dissipation and indulgence in wine and opium and his health began to fail. Nur Jahan grew alarmed. Ambitious and dominating, she felt that in the event of the emperor's death and Shah Jahan's succession, she

would be deprived not only of the controlling authority, but even influence in the management of affairs. She was too well acquainted with Shah Jahan's ability, energy, ambition and pride to be deceived into the thought that he would suffer her to retain any kind of authority in matters of State. Realising that there was no room in the empire for two masterful personalities like herself and Shah Jahan, she decided to back up Shahryar, who was the youngest surviving son of Jahangir and likely to be a pliable tool in her hands. The political differences between these two powerful personages were heightened by their attitude towards religion. Nur Jahan was a liberal Shia and disposed to be tolerant to other faiths. Shah Jahan, on the other hand, was becoming more and more staunch in his belief in the Sunni dogma. He began to dislike the Persian supremacy and predominance of Shiaism at the court. In pursuance of her scheme of putting up Shahryar as a candidate for the throne, Nur Jahan betrothed her daughter, Ladli Begam, by Sher Afgan, to that prince in December 1620. The marriage was performed at Agra in April 1621. Shahryar was raised to the rank of 8,000 zat and 4,000 sawar.

Unfortunately, Nur Jahan's mother, who had exerted a steady influence on her, died in 1621 and her husband Itimad-ud-daula followed her in January 1622. These two deaths led to the break-up of the Nur Jahan Junta and to the estrangement between Nur Jahan and Shah Jahan.

It was at this time that the Persians had laid seige to the fortress of Kandhar and Shah Jahan was directed to proceed to the relief of the besieged garrison ; but the prince was so suspicious of Nur Jahan that he did not like to lose his hold on the Dakhin. He feared that in the event of the emperor's death, whose health was rapidly falling, the queen might proclaim Shahryar as emperor and deprive him (Shah Jahan) of what he considered to be his birth-right. He requested the emperor that he should be given the absolute command of the army and the governorship of the Panjab, and that the fort of Ranthambor should be assigned for the residence of his family. If these demands were conceded, he would proceed to Kandhar after the rainy season. Nur Jahan, who had held Jahangir in a sort of intellectual bondage, convinced him that Shah Jahan entertained seditious ideas. The enraged emperor wrote to Shah Jahan to despatch to the court the royal officers and troops under his command immediately if he wanted to proceed to Kandhar after the rainy season. At this time occurred an unhappy incident which drove a

wedge between the two parties. Shah Jahan had, a little before, applied for the grant of the pargana of Dholpur as a Jagir to him. In anticipation of the imperial sanction he sent his agent Darya Khan to take charge of it. Nur Jahan had already obtained the grant of the pargana for Shahryar and appointed a faujdar there. Darya Khan in his attempt to take possession of Dholpur came into clash with Shahryar's faujdar Sharif-ul-Malik. The latter was wounded in the eye and many men lost their lives in the battle. The queen exploited the incident. Jahangir reprimanded Shah Jahan, forbade him from attending the court and directed him to send the Dakhin army to the capital without delay. Alienated from Shah Jahan, he promoted Shahryar to the rank of 12,000 zat and 8,000 sawar and appointed him chief-in-command of the Kandhar expedition. Soon after some of the former's jagirs in the Panjab were transferred to the latter. Finally inspite of Shah Jahan's explanation and apology, his remaining jagirs in the north, including Hisar, which was supposed to be the heir-apparent's appanage, were made over to Shahryar. Suspicious of her brother Asaf Khan for his secret sympathy with his son-in-law (Shah Jahan), the queen summoned from Kabul Mahabat Khan, the greatest Mughul soldier of the day, who had so far been neglected by the court, and raised him to the high rank of 6,000 zat and 5,000 sawar. Mahabat's rival Asaf Khan was sent away to Agra to bring in the royal treasure from there.

Hardly had these steps been taken when the news came of the capture of Kandhar by the enemy. Jahangir charged the Persian Shah with treachery and ordered arrangements to be made for the recovery of that important fortress. At this time reports were received of the open rebellion of Shah Jahan who seemed to have become despaired of justice at the hands of his feeble father, then under the complete domination of the imperious Nur Jahan, and of his impending project of surprise attack on and capture of Agra before the imperialists could recover from the shock. But Nur Jahan was well-served by her spies. She took prompt and effective measures to checkmate the rebel's designs. Prince Parwez was recalled from Bihar with all his men, and the loyal Rajput chiefs of Amber, Marwar, Kota, Bundi and Orchha and other states were summoned to the support of the imperial throne. Mirza Aziz Koka was conciliated, and Mahabat Khan was appointed to command the royal forces. The emperor and the queen proceeded to Delhi (Feb. 1623) enroute for Mandu in order to supervise the defence operations on

the spot. At the same time a clever envoy was sent to sound the rebel prince so as to gain time. The emperor reached Ajmer in May 1623.

From Mandu, then his headquarter, Shah Jahan with the principal officers of the Dakhin army, most of whom were convinced of the righteousness of his cause, made a dash for Fatehpur Sikri. Having failed to capture the city as its gates were prudently closed by the commandant, the prince raided Agra, but was badly defeated in an engagement with the imperialists at Bilochpura early in April 1623. Here he suffered a great loss in the fall of his staunchest supporter Sunder, entitled Rai Rayan Bikramajit, one of the greatest generals in the country. The imperialists, after over one month's halt, set out under the nominal command of Parwez who had arrived from Bihar and had been raised to the unprecedented rank of 40,000 zat and 30,000 sawar in order to exalt him above Shah Jahan, and pursued the rebels who had by this time fled to Mandu and taken shelter in that strong fortress. On the approach of Mahabat Khan who was the real head of the imperial troops there were many desertions in Shah Jahan's ranks and he was obliged to flee to Asirgarh, leaving Bairam Beg at the head of a contingent of men to hold the ferries on the Narmada and prevent Mahabat Khan from crossing over to the Dakhin. His retreat caused defection among the imperial officers and troops in Gujarat of which too he was governor and led to the loss of that province. Shah Jahan lodged his family in Asirgarh, and himself proceeded to Burhanpur, the capital of the Mughul Dakhin. His piteous appeal to his erstwhile enemy Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar, who would not like to invite on his head the wrath of the mighty Mughul emperor for the sake of a forlorn prince, did not evoke any response and a similar request to the Bijapur ruler met with an insulting rebuff. He was forced to open negotiations with Mahabhat Khan, but in this too nothing but disappointment stared him in the face. His envoy Abdur Rahim Khan Khana whom the prince had besought to bind to his cause by personal entreaty and an oath on the Quran, went over to the side of Mahabat Khan who crossed the Narmada to overtake the fugitive Shah Jahan. The emperor issued instructions to Mahabat Khan to pursue the prince and bring him a prisoner to the court or drive him out of the country. Shah Jahan had now no alternative but to flee across the Tapti into the territory of his former enemy, the Sultan of Golkunda (October),

and the imperialists returned to Burhanpur to pass the remaining of the rainy season there. Jahangir broke up his camp at Ajmer and set out for Kashmir early in November 1623.

Passing through Telingana Shah Jahan reached Mauslipatam which he quitted (November) after a few days' halt and turning to the north-east centered Orissa, then a province of the Mughul empire. Ahmad Beg Khan, the ignorant and cowardly governor of the province failed to make arrangement for its defence and fled to Cuttack, thence to Burdwan and finally to Dacca. Salih, the spirited faujdar of Burdwan, however, decided to put up resistance ; but he was defeated and compelled to surrender. After occupying Burdwan Shah Jahan pushed on to Rajmahal (then known as Akbarnagar) which was besieged and occupied only after a stubborn battle in which Ibrahim Khan, governor of Bangal, lost his life, fighting valiantly till the end. Ahmad Beg Khan, the governor of Orissa, surrendered at Dacca. The provinces of Orissa and Bangal thus passed into the hands of Shah Jahan.

With these two eastern provinces as his base, Shah Jahan planned to seize Bihar, Awadh, Allahabad, and even Agra, so as to be in a position to extort favourable terms from his enraged father. His valiant commander, prince Bhim of Mewar, made a dash for Patna and captured it without striking a blow, its pusillanimous governor Mukhlis Khan having abandoned his charge and fled to save his skin on the earliest news of the Rajput invasion. The whole of Bihar, including the formidable fortress of Rohtas, passed into Shah Jahan's hands. Jaunpur too fell in the like manner and Shah Jahan crossed the Ganga near Banaras and encamped at Kantit. He ordered the siege of Allahabad. Both Allahabad and Awadh would have been lost, had not Parwez and Mahabat Khan hastened from Burhanpur in March 1624 to the timely relief of the beleagured garrison. Their near approach obliged Abdulla Khan to raise the siege of Allahabad and retire to Jhusi. Mahabat Khan managed to collect some boats and cross the Ganga forty *kos* above Allahabad. He cut off the supplies to the rebel prince who was torn between an open battle and a retreat to the Dakhin, and compelled Shah Jahan to fight unprepared. The Mewar prince Bhim's reckless charge failed against the superior numbers of the imperial army, and he fell fighting to his last breath. A severe defeat befell Shah Jahan who was fortunate to escape with his life.

He fled to Rohtas and leaving Mumtaz Mahal, who was too weak to travel after child-birth, in the fort there, retreated to Bangal.

From Bangal Shah Jahan fled back to the Dakhin, and passing through Orissa, Telingana and Golkunda, set foot on the Ahmadnagar territory. During his absence bitter hostility had broken out between Malik Ambar, the all powerful minister of Ahmadnagar, and the Sultan of Bijapur. In October 1623 each of the two had sought the assistance of the Mughal general Mahabat Khan, who had wisely refused taking sides in their quarrel as long as Shah Jahan was in rebellion, and chose to help Bijapur only after the rebel prince had quitted the Dakhin for Orissa (end of 1623). As soon as Mahabat Khan set out for the north to hound Shah Jahan out of the country, Malik Ambar, feeling relieved, concluded an alliance with Golkunda and defeated a Bijapur army at Bidar. After plundering Bidar, he besieged the Adil Shah in Bijapur. The beleagured Sultan recalled his contingent in the Mughul service and also appealed to the imperialists in charge of the Mughul Dakhin for immediate help. Afraid of being caught between the two armies, Ambar, leaving a part of his force before the walls of Bijapur, made a sudden dash and surprised the advancing reinforcements under Mulla Muhammad and Lashkar Khan in their camp at Bhatwi, slaying the one and putting the other to flight. He then besieged Ahmadnagar, the capital of the Mughul Dakhin, and at the same time pushed on with the siege of Bijapur. At this juncture Shah Jahan, who had suffered a very crushing defeat in the north, returned to the Dakhin, and was cordially welcomed by Malik Ambar, a life-long enemy of the Mughuls, and was persuaded to enter into an alliance with him against his father Jahangir. At Ambar's request Shah Jahan besieged the fort of Burhanpur, but failed to capture it. Meanwhile Parwez and Mahabat Khan re-entered the Dakhin in pursuit of Shah Jahan who was obliged to raise the siege of Burhanpur and retire to Rohangarh in Balaghat. Here the prince fell ill and Abdulla Khan, his only notable and faithful follower at this time, turned a hermit. Shah Jahan had now no alternative but to submit to his father.

Deprived of most of his followers by death and desertion, prostrated by physical and mental illness, and threatened by the invincible army and never-failing generalship of Mahabat Khan, nothing but destruction stared the despondent Shah Jahan in the face, and compelled him to take an immediate decision about his

future conduct. He decided in favour of an unconditional surrender and wrote to the emperor begging his forgiveness. Nur Jahan, who was becoming suspicious of Mahabat Khan's conduct and his fast rising power and prestige, was in a mood to treat and in March 1626 demanded an immediate surrender of Rohtasgarh and Asirgarh and to despatch to the court the prince's sons Dara and Aurangzeb, then aged ten and eight respectively. Shah Jahan complied without hesitation. He was forgiven and was appointed governor of Balaghat.

The three-year-old rebellion, which had convulsed the empire with a civil war and caused a considerable loss of men and money, came to an end in April 1626.

Mahabat Khan's *coup d' etat*, March 1626

Immediately on the conclusion of peace with Shah Jahan, the imperious queen decided to reduce Mahabat Khan, the greatest soldier and diplomat in the empire, to submission. During Shah Jahan's rebellion Mahabat Khan's prestige had risen considerably and as he had to be employed for putting down the rebel, the queen did not then think it advisable to settle her score with him. Nur Jahan would not tolerate the existence of an indomitable personality like Mahabat Khan, who, in view of his ability and achievements, was not prepared to play a second fiddle to anyone. He had his own ambition and would not like to take orders from anyone except his patron and sovereign, Jahangir. He resented the usurpation of power by Nur Jahan, especially because she had been an ordinary woman before her marriage with the emperor and since that time was successfully planning to dominate the court without caring for the loyal services of the trusted nobles of the empire. Her candidate for the throne, Shahryar, was a good-for-nothing fellow and was chosen only to serve as a mere tool in the hands of his ambitious mother-in-law. On the other hand, Mahabat Khan supported the claims of Parwez who was in every way more capable a prince than Shahryar and was not prepared to accept Nur Jahan's supremacy. The queen feared Mahabat Khan's ability and his devotion to the interest of the royal family and his dislike of herself. On account of these reasons the two powerful personages felt unable to live in peace and Nur Jahan took early steps to encompass the ruin of the great general. As soon as Shah Jahan had agreed to unconditional surrender, she had Mahabat Khan transferred to

Bangal and Khan Jahan Lodi appointed in his place as adviser to prince Parwez. After some hesitation, the prince agreed to accept Khan Jahan as his Vakil and to remain at Burhanpur according to imperial instuctions. Mahabat Khan also prepared to leave for Bangal.

In alliance with her brother Asaf Khan who was equally jealous of Mahabat, the queen now framed charges of disloyalty and disobedience against the latter. An imperial *farman* was issued asking him to send to court the elephants he was said to have obtained in Bihar and Bangal during Shah Jahan's revolt, and to furnish an account of the large sums of money said to have been collected by him from dispossessed jagirdars in the two provinces. If Mahabat failed to comply, he was to be recalled to court without delay. The Khan saw through the game and felt that Nur Jahan's plan was to disgrace him and to reduce him to dust. So he decided to proceed to the Panjab where the emperor happened to be at the time and represent his case personally to his master. If he failed to obtain justice, he would bring the emperor under control by a *coup de main* and thus deprive Nur Jahan of power in the state. With his 4 to 5 thousand loyal Rajput soldiers, he reached the vicinity of the imperial camp near the river Jhelum in March 1626. Jahangir had returned from Kashmir and was on his way to Kabul. He was to cross the river Jhelum the next morning. The news of Mahabat Khan's approach at the head of a powerful Rajput army caused consternation in the royal camp. Instead of making arrangements for the disbandment of Mahabat's troops, the emperor only ordered him to remain where he was and the queen chose to hurl further insult at him, by asking him to explain as to why he had affianced his daughter to a noble man's son named Barkhurdar without the previous permission of the court. Barkhurdar was summoned to court, was publicly disgraced and with his hands tied to his neck, sent to prison. The dowry given to him by Mahabat was forfeited. Such an act drove Mahabat Khan to decide to secure to the person of the emperor and strike a sudden blow at the power of the queen.

Early in the morning of the next day Mahabat at the head of his Rajputs appeared suddenly before the imperial tents, having already detached about 2,000 of his horsemen to hold the bridge on the Jhelum and not to allow anyone to pass. Most of the imperial army had gone to the other side of the river, while the emperor and

the queen with a handful of men were still in camp on the left bank, waiting to cross the river. When Mahabat appeared at the gate of the imperial encampment, the royal troops were filled with alarm, and made little or no attempt to obstruct his passage. Mahabat rode to the door of the imperial tent and there alighted from his horse. When informed of this daring act, Jahangir came out and took his seat in a palki. Mahabat stepping forward saluted the emperor and said that he had come to throw himself on his majesty's protection and to suffer any punishment that might be awarded to him in the royal presence. He did not like to die at the hands of his enemy, Asaf Khan, who was planning his destruction. As he was talking to the emperor his Rajputs surrounded the royal apartments. Jahangir in rage more than once placed his hand on the hilt of his sword to give a blow to Mahabat. But he was dissuaded from doing so. He agreed to mount a horse and accompany Mahabat after the latter had refused to permit him to go in and change his dress. The emperor was next mounted on an elephant and taken to Mahabat's camp and placed under the guard of the latter's sons.

Mahabat Khan had undertaken this *coup d' etat* under an impulse, and had forgotten to take under his custody the queen who was the real power behind the throne. When he realised this mistake, he returned to the imperial camp, but found that the Begam had crossed the river to the other side and was beyond his reach. He decided to bring Nur Jahan and Asaf Khan under his control the next day.

The queen seems to have been unaware of Mahabat's coup, and was apprised of it only after she had crossed the Jhelum. She held a council of war, scolded her brother Asaf Khan for his negligence, and made arrangements for rescuing the emperor. Jahangir heard of the queen's preparations and sent messages to warn her against any such attempt which was bound to injure the imperial cause beyond recovery. He sent his own ring to assure the queen that the warning given was not under Mahabat's influence and was entirely his own. But the indomitable queen would not believe and stuck to her determination. Accompanied by a large number of troops she attempted to cross the river so as to launch an attack on Mahabat's force, but for lack of proper leadership, the party got divided into several groups, and only a small number reached the other bank. Mahabat's Rajputs were ready

to give the Begam's force a fitting reception. Quite a number of them were slain, some were wounded and most fled back and were drowned in their attempt to reach the other side of the river. Nur Jahan, seated on an elephant and leading the attack, was compelled to retire. Her elephant received several wounds and Shahryar's baby daughter in the queen's arm was also hit by an arrow. Asaf Khan behaved throughout with pusillanimity and fled to the fort at Attock for safety. A small group of loyal followers headed by Fidai Khan displayed vigour and enthusiasm and launched a vigorous attack on Mahabat's men, but these were forced back with great slaughter.

After his failure Nur Jahan voluntarily surrendered to Mahabat Khan and was permitted to join Jahangir. Mahabat Khan's supremacy was now complete. He took charge of administration, appointed his men to key positions and took steps to put down the partisans of the queen. An army was sent against Asaf Khan at Attock which secured his surrender. After about two months' stay in the Panjab, the emperor proceeded to Kabul, reconciling himself outwardly to Mahabat's domination. But the general's power rested on force and bred discontent among the members of the court. Moreover, Mahabat was primarily a soldier and diplomat, but no statesman or even an administrator. His favourites mis-managed the affairs entrusted to them and caused resentment among the people. At Kabul there was a quarrel between his Rajput troops and a section of the royal force called the Ahadis. Some Rajputs had turned out their horses to graze on the imperial hunting grounds; which was objected to by the Ahadis and the guards. In the scuffle an Ahadi was slain. The Ahadis were not satisfied with Mahabat's promise to hold an enquiry and punish the offender, and attacked the Rajputs, 8 to 9 hundreds of whom were killed. Mahabat became unpopular. The Muslim public, which disliked the Rajput influence, staged a rising. Although it was easily put down by Mahabat, his power and prestige suffered a great setback. The hostility of the court increased in the reverse proportion to the reduction in his armed strength. This gave the astute Nur Jahan an opportunity to conspire against the general. Jahangir's consummate duplicity convinced Mahabat that he was quite happy under the latter's domination and thus kept him off his guard. During the return journey from Kabul Nur Jahan hatched a plot to secure the emperor's release. It was arranged when the camp was near Rohtas that Jahangir would

hold a review of the imperial troops. He sent word to Mahabat that he should order his own troops to remain at a little distance so as to prevent any possibility of a clash between the two armies. The general, who felt the ground slipping under his feet, complied. On the pretence of reviewing the trops Jahangir placed himself at the head of the imperial army, and Mahabat, feeling that his domination was at an end, left the place for Lahore. Thus his "reign of hundred days" was over.

While retreating to Lahore, Mahabat Khan took with him Asaf Khan, one or two other important nobles and Prince Daniyal's sons, as hostages. He was compelled to send them back. Nur Jahan who had now regained her former supremacy took immediate steps to undermine Mahabat's crumbling power and to reorganise the administration that had fallen into decay on account of the general's incompetence as an administrator. Immediately after the emperor's release, a regular *darbar* was held at Rohtas and a redistribution of high offices took place. Peremptory orders were sent to Mahabat to release Daniyal's sons and also Asaf Khan and other nobles, which he did, for he felt that he had no power to oppose the imperious queen. He further complied with the emperor's commands of proceeding towards Thatta in order to face Shah Jahan who had moved from the Dakhin on the receipt of the news of Mahabat's successful coup.

The end of the Dakhin War

When early in 1626 Nur Jahan had recalled Mahabat Khan from the Dakhin, Khan Jahan Lodi was appointed to take charge of that province. Although brave and intrepid, the latter lacked foresight and political wisdom and was no match to Malik Ambar, the king-maker of Ahmadnagar. He could make no headway against the Abyssinian minister, and allowed the imperial prestige in Southern India to suffer. But Malik Ambar died in May 1626, after which war again broken out. Malik Ambar was succeeded by Hamid Khan who too was an able commander and politician. Khan Jahan accepted a huge bribe from Hamid and made peace with him leaving Balaghat as far as Ahmadnagar under his possession. While the imperial fortune was receiving a setback in the Dakhin, Jahangir died. His Dakhin policy had failed owing to mis-management, corruption and dissensions among the Mughul officers.

Jahangir—his personality aud character

After regaining his freedom from the clutches of Mahabat Khan, Jahangir, whose health had completely broken down, set out for Kashmir in March 1627. But even Kashmir failed to help the restoration of his health. So he returned to Lahore. While he was yet on the way, he was taken ill and died early in the morning of 7th November N.S. (28th October, O.S.), 1627 near Bhimbar. He was then 58 years of age. He was buried in a beautiful garden at Shahdara near Lahore. His widowed queen Nur Jahan subsequently erected a handsome mausoleum over his grave.

There are two contradictory views about the personality and character of Jahangir. Some modern European writers considered him to have been a fickle-minded tyrant, fond of wine and women and unsuccessful both as a man and a ruler. On the other hand, some of the Indian writers looked upon him as a just and noble monarch who tried to rule with justice and impartiality. The truth lies between these two extremes. As a man Jahangir was on the whole an amiable personality. He was respectful to his mother and other elderly members of his family and although he rebelled against his great father and remained in rebellion for years, yet he had done that under a wrong impulse and on the advice of his selfish companions and eventually realised his folly and made amends after he was in possession of the throne. He cherished the loving memory of Akbar, and in thought and expression, held him in great reverence. He would walk to his mausoleum at Sikandra and rub his forehead at its threshold. He was a devoted husband, and though polygamous, he knew what it was to love a wife. He lamented the loss of his first queen, the Jaipur princess, and on her death refused to touch food and drink for four days. His devotion to Nur Jahan was thorough and bordered on subservience. For him it was unthinkable to undertake any important measure without consulting her. He was a good friend and remembered and promoted all those who had rendered him any service in his princehood, after he became king. He wished sincerely the welfare of his subjects and endeavoured to promote their material and moral interests.

Jahangir was a highly educated and cultured prince. He had mastered Persian and Turki and was acquainted with Hindi and Arabic and a few other languages. His knowledge of the Persian language was remarkable and his style at once plain and graceful. His memoirs entitled *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* are an excellent example of

his composition. A man of great literary taste and love of poetry, architecture, music, painting and other fine arts, it was remarkable that he, at the same time, had genuine interest in serious subjects like Botany, Zoology and Medicine. His autobiography is a testimony to his extra-ordinary knowledge of the above subjects, and above all to his great curiosity and thirst for knowledge. He was fond of the beauties of nature, of flowers and foliage, brooks and rivers, valleys and mountains. He took care to describe flowers and fruits which he came across in his tours in the country and particularly in Kashmir. His vivid account of birds and animals is nearly as accurate as that of a specialist in Zoology. Mughul painting and music reached high standards of development under his patronage. Jahangir prided himself on being a connoisseur of the art of painting and used to say that he was sure to find out as to who were the authors of various paintings, and if a picture was painted by the joint labours of a number of artists, he could tell as to who had painted the various parts of it. "As regards myself," writes Jahangir in his autobiography, "my liking for painting and practice in judging it have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought before me, either of deceased artists or the present day, without the names being told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each face be the work of a different master, I can discern which face is the work of each. If any other person has put in the eye and eyebrow of a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is and who has painted the eye and eyebrows." (*Jahangir's Memoirs*, Vol. II, p. 20). His court artists acquired high proficiency in portrait painting and producing exact likeness of the original. Sir Thomas Roe presented to the emperor an English miniature whose exact copy was produced by a court painter at Jahangir's orders, and when the two were placed before Roe, it was difficult for him to distinguish the original. On the contrary, Jahangir was at little pains to distinguish one from the other.

Jahangir was much interested in architecture, though it must be admitted that his contribution to the development of that art was much less than to painting. Among the notable buildings erected by him, Akbar's tomb at Sikandra is the most remarkable. He altered its design and partly rebuilt it. Itimad-ud-daula's tomb near Agra, constructed under the direction of Nur Jahan, is one of

the finest buildings of its kind in the country and is adorned with mosaic work outside and paintings inside. Under Jahangir's patronage a great mosque was built in Lahore; it rivals that at Delhi built by his son Shah Jahan.

Next to painting Jahangir took delight in laying out fine gardens. Some of the gardens in Kashmir and in Lahore were laid out at his orders. He tried to adorn the currency with fine calligraphic designs. He struck beautiful medals and coins with his portraits stamped on them.

Jahangir was possessed of a fine critical taste in matters of dress and pleasures of the table. He designed new fashions and stuffs for himself and forbade other people to make use of them. He particularly relished fine fruits. He praised the mangoes as one of the best fruits and was very fond of delicious cherries of Kabul.

Jahangir's main defects were his addiction to ease, drink and sensual pleasures and his natural habit of falling under someone's control. His early activity gave place to indolence with the advance of age, and he left much of his work in the hands of others. As a prince he was under the influence of his boon companions and as ruler he was controlled first by the Nur Jahan Junta and subsequently by the ambitious queen herself. As he relates frankly in his memoirs, he began drinking wine from the age of 18 and gradually in nine years increased the number of his cups of doubly distilled liquor to twenty, fourteen of which he took during the day and the remaining during the night. He became so much habituated to drinking that wine ceased to intoxicate him and he changed to spirit. But he abstained from drinking on Thursday evening and from meats on Thursday and Sunday, the first being the day of his accession and the latter the birthday of his father.

It is difficult to define clearly Jahangir's religious belief. Sir Thomas Roe denounced him as an atheist. Some other contemporary writers called him an eclectic or a devout Muslim or even as a Christian. The fact, however, was that he was not a believer in orthodox dogmas of any religion. He was a liberal Musalman whose religious belief and practices were generally based on tolerant understanding of the principles of other faiths. A study of contemporary works including his own autobiography makes it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jahangir believed in God and revered saints, Hindu and Muslim, and took delight in their company. Being unorthodox in his views, he had little sympathy with Muslim

fanatics. Nor did he appreciate modern Hinduism which believes in idolatry and incarnation. He did not seem to be convinced about Christ's parentage and crucification. He was not particular about five daily prayers and fast of Ramzan enjoined by Islam. Although, unlike his father, he was not deeply interested in the absorbing problems of relation between man and God and life after death, he was without doubt a believer in the unity of God.

Trained in soldierly pursuits and art of warfare under the supervision of his father, Jahangir in his early youth had developed into a capable soldier. He was devoted to sport and was a skilful shot with rifle and with bow and arrow. He was given practical training in war and diplomacy and acquired a considerable experience of both, but never displayed that energy and devotion which are necessary in a general. In fact, except personal courage and skill in the use of arms, he lacked the genius and ambition of a commander and general. Neither as prince nor as king did he achieve a signal success in battle. He used to pride himself on the subjugation of Mewar and conquest of Kangra which had baffled his great father. But these achievements were not so much due to Jahangir's generalship as to the circumstances of the time, the weakness of his enemies and the ability of Shah Jahan and other generals. We do not notice in the pages of contemporary writers any hint of an attempt on the part of the emperor to improve training, organisation, equipment or discipline of the Mughul army. Nor did it ever occur to Jahangir to raise the morale of his men and inspire them with lofty feelings of devotion or patriotism. In fact, the military system under him suffered a little deterioration as compared with that of his great father.

Jahangir was a fairly successful ruler and administrator. He had the capacity of appreciating the needs and circumstances of the age and the good sense to continue the administrative system and policy devised by Akbar. But he was not a great constructive statesman who could initiate great administrative reforms and legislate for the good of the generation yet to be born. He did not possess high idealism and genius of Akbar. The administrative machinery of his father was allowed to remain practically untouched. The Vakil or Vakil-i-Mutlaq remained the highest dignitary next only to the emperor and so also other ministers. The essential difference between his administration and that of his father was the fact that the latter having been an unfailing judge of human character and

capability almost invariably appointed right men to right offices, while Jahangir was sometimes swayed by other considerations than the efficiency, justice and well-being of the people.

Religious policy

Jahangir's accession had raised the hopes of orthodox Muslim theologians of the restoration of Islam to the position which it had occupied before Akbar had dis-established it as the religion of the state. They tried to convert the new emperor to their views so as to persuade him to reverse the work of secularising the state that his great father had almost completed. In the beginning this policy achieved some success, but within a few years of his accession Jahangir, who was nurtured in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of his father's court, realised the folly of playing into the hands of the *Ulema*. It was impossible for a liberal minded monarch like Jahangir to go back on the path of toleration which Akbar had opened. Nevertheless, he took greater interest in the fortune of Islam than his father had done and sometimes he tried to uphold its prestige. In the 15th year of his regin, he ordered the punishment of the Hindus of Rajauri who used to marry Muslim girls of the locality and convert them to Hinduism. Sometimes during war with Hindus, he ordered temples to be demolished, as in Mewar and Kangra. While at war with the Portuguese, he ordered churches in the empire to be closed. Sometimes, though very rarely indeed, he became guilty of acts of sacrilege. At Ajmer he ordered the temple of Varaha, the Boar incarnation, to be destroyed and the idols to be thrown into a tank. These seem to have been the result of temporary fits or impulse. On the whole, Jahangir followed the policy of toleration towards all faiths. He permitted non-Muslims to build public places of worship and allowed Hindus to visit their holy places without hinderance or charging the pilgrim's tax. He maintained Christian service at the expense of the court and paid allowance to Christian Fathers. He imposed no restriction on the public celebration of religious festivals by Hindus and himself participated in some of them, such as Vasant, Rakshabandhan and Dasehra. He used to see renowned Yogis during the night of Shivratri. Christians too were allowed to hold public celebrations during Easter, Christmas and other festivals.

Though usually liberal and tolerant towards all religions, Jahangir at times sanctioned repressive measures against Muslim heretics. Shaikh Rahim of Lahore, who was the religious leader of a

sect, was imprisoned in the fortress of Chunar. Qazi Nurullah was put to death on account of his being a notable Shia writer. Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi was imprisoned in the fortress of Gwalior, but he was released sometime after and sent back to Sarhind with gifts.

Jahangir's relations with Sikhs were not happy. The Sikh Guru Arjun had incurred his displeasure on account of his proselytising activities and principally because he had blessed the rebel prince Khusrav. Jahangir, therefore, summoned the guru and sentenced him to capital punishment. On the intercession of some influential Hindus the capital punishment was commuted into a fine of one lakh of rupees ; but Guru Arjun refused to pay the fine and was, therefore, imprisoned. He died in prison as the result of torture. Diwan Chandu Lal of Lahore who had stood surety for payment was also put to death. Thereafter, the emperor refrained from interfering with the Sikhs. His action against Guru Arjun was prompted both by religious feelings and by political considerations. Jahangir wrote in his diary that Arjun was converting Muslims to his religion and therefore he was anxious 'to close the shop' of the Sikh guru. After the guru's death, he wisely refrained from interfering with his followers.

Similarly, the emperor's relations with the Jains proved to be far from satisfactory. Man Singh, a leader of the Jains, had made a prophecy during the time of Khusrav's rebellion, that Jahangir's reign would terminate within two years. The emperor was naturally angry, but as Man Singh lived under the protection of the ruler of Bikaner, he could not take action against him. When he visited Gujarat in the twelfth year of his reign, he accused the Jains of having built temples and made them centres of disturbance. So he issued orders for their expulsion from the imperial territories. Most of the Jains had, therefore, to leave Gujarat. Dr. Beni Prasad holds that the order was later on withdrawn. There is, however, no contemporary evidence to support such a statement. The persecution of the Jains was due partly to political and partly to religious considerations.

Like his father, Jahangir was interested in religious discussion with the followers of different faiths. He invited learned Hindu pandits and Christian missionaries, and sometimes even Muslim ulema and listened to their discourses. He was fond of the company of the Vaishnava leader Jadurup and held many discussions with him at Ujjain and Mathura, as a result of which he came to the conclu-

sion that the Hindu Vedanta and Muslim Sufism were almost identical. He had discourse with Mian Mir, the famous Muslim Saint of Lahore. Sometimes he made chelas after the fashion of his father. But his interest in religious discussion was not absorbing as that of Akbar the Great.

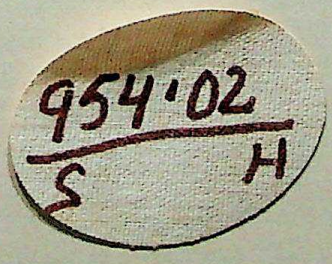
Jahangir made no departure from his father's policy of admitting Hindus to the higher public services. In fact, he made no discrimination against any class of his subjects on the ground of religion or race as far as State services were concerned. There were three Hindu governors during his reign, namely, Man Singh, Kalyan Singh son of Todar Mal, and Vikramadit. There were many Hindus on other high posts. They were citizens of the empire in the same sense as Muslims.

On the whole, Jahangir was a successful ruler and the material condition of the people under him was good. Agriculture, industries and commerce flourished and people did not suffer from starvation. Although he did not plan great reforms for the material and moral well-being of his subjects as Akbar had done, he tried to abolish some of the social evils and took delight in doing humanitarian work. During the early years of his reign he forbade the sale and use of *bhang* and other hemp drugs and rice spirit. He also prohibited gambling. He tried to safeguard the interests of the agriculturists and made payments of compensation for the damage done to crops by his troops on the march. He also issued orders that Hindu widows should not be compelled to become *sati* without his government's permission and he tried to put a stop to female infanticide. He took delight in doing kindly acts of charity, established free kitchens for the poor and distributed money to *fakirs*. His policy was one of improving the social condition of the people without interfering with important social usages of the various communities. He sincerely desired the well-being of the public and quoted with disapproval the story of a king who had imposed a tax on gardens in his kingdom, as a result of which the quality and quantity of fruit had deteriorated, himself taking pride on the fact that he had no such greed as far as fruit gardens in his dominions were concerned. This shows how well-intentioned he was in the matter of material welfare of his subjects.

Barring a few incidents, when in a fit of rage he inflicted barbarous punishments, Jahangir was normally a justice-loving monarch. He rightly took credit for dispensing even-handed justice to all irres-

pective of birth, rank or official position. He used to say that God forbid he should care for nobles or even princes in matters of dispensation of justice. This was not a mere boast. His autobiography as well as writings of contemporary historians establish the fact that the emperor tried to decide cases impartially. As a rule, capital punishment was awarded only by the emperor and that too sparingly. Strict instructions were issued to those responsible for carrying out royal orders that when capital punishment was awarded they should not execute his orders till sun-set. His justice was tempered with mercy.

Jahangir cannot be called a great king, nor can he be described as a statesman and administrator of outstanding calibre. He was by no means a first rate general or diplomat. But it must be admitted that he was a successful and benevolent ruler who cherished the well-being of his subjects and was deservedly popular with them. Like most rulers, he had his virtues and faults. The late Sir Richard Burn's characterisation of him is balanced and just, and deserves to be quoted. "He stands in the roll of Indian monarchs," writes he, "as a man with generous instincts, fond of sport, art and good living, aiming to do well to all, and failing by the lack of the finer intellectual qualities to attain the ranks of great administrators."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SHAH JAHAN (1627—1658)

Early career, 1592—1627

Shah Jahan was born on January 5 (15 N.S.), 1592 at Lahore. His mother was the famous Rajput princess, Jagat Gusain, daughter of Mota Raja Udai Singh. The child was named Khurram. In his childhood he was the favourite of his grand-father Akbar who loved him more than any other of his grand-children. Khurram was extra-ordinarily intelligent and smart and gave evidence of future greatness. His early education was planned and supervised by Akbar who spared no pains to bring Khurram up as a worthy member of the great Mughul ruling family. The prince displayed eagerness to learn the Persian language and literature but did not make progress in Turki. He must have acquainted himself with spoken Hindi. Although he did not write his autobiography like his father, he acquired mastery over Persian language and literature. Besides, he learnt history, politics, geography, theology and medicine. Military training formed an important part of the prince's education, and he became in due course a good soldier, adept in the use of weapons of offence and defence, and equipped with a knowledge of theory and practice of military science. While yet on the verge of manhood, he established his reputation for being one of the greatest commanders in the empire.

Early during his father's reign, Khurram was marked out for the throne. His eldest brother Khusrav lost favour with Jahangir on account of his unfilial conduct, which gave a chance to Khurram of gaining the royal patronage. In 1607 he was appointed a manasabdar of 8,000 zat and 5,000 sawar with flags and drums. In 1608 the jagir of Hisar Firoza, which was usually meant for the heir-apparent, was bestowed on him. In 1610 he was married to the daughter of Muzaffar Husain Safawi, and the next year he was promoted to the rank of 10,000 zat and 5,000 sawar. In 1612, when he had completed his 20th year, he was married to Arjumand Banu Begum, daughter of Asaf Khan. The prince's matrimonial connection with the family of Asaf Khan who was the elder brother of Nur Jahan,

led to the formation of an alliance between him, Nur Jahan, Itmad-ud-daulah and Asaf Khan. This clique known as Nur Jahan Junta ruled the empire for 10 years, during which period Khurram was looked upon as the future ruler of the country, and was promoted to the unprecedented rank of 30,000 zat and 20,000 sawar.

Khurram was employed in a series of important expeditions and his father's reign was mainly a record of brilliant victories won by this prince. One of his early exploits was his success over Mewar. In 1614 he was sent with a powerful contingent of troops against the Rana. The campaign terminated successfully and Rana Amar Singh submitted and was granted honourable terms. The victory enhanced Khurram's prestige and he was regarded as a rising star in the empire. Next he was appointed governor of the Dakhin and was given the title of Shah. The prince was able to persuade Malik Ambar to return Balaghat and surrender Ahmadnagar and other forts with the result that Khurram's successful diplomacy became an acknowledged fact in the eyes of the Mughul court. Jahangir was highly pleased and showered gifts on Shah Khurram. In recognition of his success the province of Gujarat was added to his charge.

There was a sudden fall in Khurram's fortune, after he had, in alliance with Nur Jahan, ruled the empire for about 10 years. The queen who now supported the claims of her son-in-law Shahryar to succession began to entertain a dislike for Khurram and drove him into rebellion. The prince was hunted from place to place and was reduced to great misery. Eventually, he submitted to his father in 1626 and was restored to favour.

Accession, 1628

On Jahangir's death, Nur Jahan made a final bid to retain power. She tried to imprison her brother, Asaf Khan, who was the father-in-law of Khurram and his staunch supporter, and wrote to her own son-in-law, Shahryar, to strengthen her party, increase her armed forces, and to be ready for the struggle. But Asaf Khan was an astute politician and getting wind of his sister's intention refused to see the queen. On the contrary he won over important nobles to the side of Khurram and proclaimed Dawar Bakhsh, son of Khusrav, as king so as not to leave the throne vacant. At the same time, he sent a messenger of Shah Jahan in the Dakhin to hurry up to Delhi, as soon as possible. During the interval Khurram's rival, Shahryar, proclaimed himself emperor, seized the royal treasure at Lahore and

confiscated the property of the nobles there. He recruited a large army by a lavish distribution of money. Asaf Khan who was making counter-preparations on behalf of Shah Jahan, gave Shahryar battle near Lahore. The latter was defeated and taken a prisoner and blinded. Meanwhile, Shah Jahan was proceeding to the north with great speed. He was welcomed on the way by important chiefs, particularly by Rana Karan of Mewar. While yet on the way he sent secret instructions to Asaf Khah to put all the royal princes including Dawar Bakhsh, the sacrificial lamb, to death which were literally complied with by his heartless father-in-law. He arrived near Agra early in February 1628, and entered the city at an auspicious moment on 14th February. His coronation took place amidst great pomp and rejoicings, and the Khutba was read in his name. Asaf Khan was promoted to the rank of 8,000 zat and 8,000 sawar and was appointed wazir. Mahabat Khan was given the mansab of 7,000 zat and 7,000 sawar and the title of Khan Khana. Nur Jahan was given an adequate pension and allowed to spend the rest of her life peacefully in or near Lahore, where she built her husband's mausoleum, carried on the works of charity, and died in 1645.

Rebellion of Khan Jahan Lodi, 1628-31

Shah Jahan's reign was disturbed by several rebellions. The first of these was that of Khan Jahan Lodi, a capable but turbulent officer who was given charge of the Dakhin as adviser to Prince Parwez. He was an impulsive and dashing soldier and a hater of Hindus. While in the Dakhin, he accepted bribe from the Nizam Shah and surrendered Balaghat to him. On Jahangir's death he supported and allied himself with Nur Jahan. He left a small garrison at Burhanpur, his headquarters, and proceeded to the north to seize the fortress of Mandu, but he failed to do so. As Shah Jahan had already reached Ajmer in a triumphal procession and was thought likely to be the next empreor, most of the troops of Khan Jahan Lodi, particularly his Hindu supporters, melted away and he was compelled to send his humble submission. This was accepted. He was forgiven, allowed to retain his governorship of the Dakhin and ordered to return to his headquarters at Burhanpur. While in the Dakhin, he was directed to recover Balaghat which task he failed to accomplish and was therefore recalled to court, and in his place Mahabat Khan was appointed governor of the Dakhin. At Agra, Khan Jahan remained discontented and after sometime abstained from attending

the daily court. Although he was again forgiven, he continued feeling dissatisfied and made preparations to flee to the Dakhin. He was followed and overtaken near the river Chambal. There was a regular battle between the imperial army and Khan Jahan's troops, and the latter with his sons and some followers managed to cross the river, but without his women and treasure. Passing through Bundelkhand and Gondwana, he reached Ahmadnagar. He was welcomed by the Nizam Shahi Sultan and given charge of Bir and some other tracts of lands, then in possession of the Mughuls, with instructions to recover them. Khan Jahan Lodi attacked the imperialists and inflicted a defeat upon them. The situation became so menacing that Shah Jahan had to march personally to the Dakhin in December 1629. The emperor organised a comprehensive plan of action against the rebels. As he possessed an intimate knowledge of the Dakhin politics, he realised that the kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda being jealous of each other, would not unite among themselves to repel the Mughuls. He was also aware that the Marathas were quite troublesome and it was desirable to attract them to the Mughul service by liberal offers. Keeping these facts in view he planned to send three armies against the rebellious Khan Jahan to overwhelm him from three sides. One of these under Abdul Hasan was despatched to Dhulia to command the route for supplies from the side of Gujarat and also to threaten Ahmadnagar from the north-west; the second army was posted at Dewalgaon in the south of Berar to attack the enemy from the north-east; and the third army was despatched towards Telangana to attack Khan Jahan from that side. A good number of the Marathas were employed to help the consummation of the scheme. Inspite of great scarcity in the Dakhin and the neighbouring province of Gujarat due to failure of rains, a fierce war was waged. Khan Jahan was defeated and compelled to flee to Bijapur in order to take shelter in Daulatabad, but failed to get any. The imperialists pursued him and were reinforced by Shahji Bhonsle, father of the famous Shivaji, who had abandoned the Ahmadnagar service and entered that of Shah Jahan. The followers of Khan Jahan Lodi raided the imperial territory and a series of running engagements were fought. The King of Ahmadnagar who had given support to Khan Jahan Lodi now repented and turned out rebels from his territory. Khan Jahan, therefore, fled to the north and passing through Malwa attempted to reach the Panjab in the hope that he would be joined by disaffected Afghans in north-

western Hindustan. Shah Jahan was, therefore, obliged to detach a force to catch the rebel. Vikramajit, son of Jujhar Singh of Bundelkhand, who had helped the rebels to escape through Bundelkhand early during his rebellion, this time attacked the rebel and killed Darya Khan with many of his followers early in January 1631. Khan Jahan Lodi escaped, but was overtaken and killed in a skirmish at Sihonda in the modern Banda district of Uttar Pradesh.

Rebellion in Bundelkhand, 1628-29

The next rebellion was that of Jujhar Singh, son of Bir Singh Deva Bundela, who had slain Abul Fazl at the instigation of the late emperor Jahangir, then in rebellion against his father Akbar. Jujhar Singh enjoyed a high position among the chiefs in the empire on account of favours shown to his father by the late emperor and owing to the geographical situation of his territory (Bundelkhand) and the bravery of his clansmen. On the accession of Shah Jahan, he went to Agra for royal service, leaving his son Bikramajit Singh to conduct the administration of his state. Bikramajit managed to alienate the people by his oppressive treatment and repacious collections of revenues. The new emperor ordered an enquiry into the past collections which alarmed Jujhar Singh. He returned to Orchha and began to make preparations for asserting his independence. Shah Jahan could take no action against the raja for sometime, as his attention was diverted by the raids on the frontier suba of Kabul by Jamid, chief of Trans-Oxiana. But as soon as the frontier trouble was over, Mahabat Khan was ordered to put down the rebellion in Bundelkhand. Two more armies, one under Abdulla Khan from the east and the other under Khan Jahan from the Dakhin, were sent to co-operate with Mahabat Khan in the campaign. Raja Bharat Singh, a kinsman of Jujhar Singh, coveted Bundelkhand and was persuaded to join the imperialists with his troops. Aware of the strength of the Bundelas, Shah Jahan himself hastened to Gwalior in the beginning of January 1629 in order to exert pressure on the enemy by his presence in the vicinity of Bundelkhand. Abdulla Khan attacked and captured Erachh, now in the Jhansi district, while Khan Jahan commenced ravaging Bundelkhand from the south. Jujhar Singh was thus hemmed in from all sides, and harassed by the opposition of many of his own people, he found it impossible to oppose successfully the powerful invading forces backed by the resources of a mighty empire, and he

submitted. He was pardoned (February 1629) on condition of surrendering a part of his jagirs and proceeding on service to the Dakhin.

During 1635-36, Bundelkhand was once again convulsed by Jujhar Singh's rebellion. He had served faithfully in the Dakhin about 5 years and was one of those responsible for the capture of Daulatabad. On his return to Orchha in 1634 he formed the ambitious project of conquering Gondwana, which lay south of Bundelkhand and had not yet been brought under the direct rule of the Mughuls. His main object was to make good the loss in territory he had suffered in 1629. He besieged Chauragarh in 1635 and inspite of Shah Jahan's warning, treacherously put its Raja, Prem Narain, to death. The deceased's son appealed to Shah Jahan who instead of taking steps to restore the territory in question to its legitimate heir, directed Jujhar Singh to surrender Gondwana to him, or to give up his own lands in lieu of it and also to pay a fine of 5 lakhs of rupees. Jujhar Singh refused to comply and recalled his troops under his son Jagraj from the royal service in the Dakhin. Shah Jahan was enraged and deputed Aurangzeb to suppress the rebellion. Inspite of numerous difficulties, Aurangzeb stormed Orchha and proceeded to Dhamoni where Jujhar Singh had taken shelter. On this the Bundela retreated to Chauragarh. After capturing Dhamoni, Aurangzeb began his march to Chauragarh which obliged Jujhar Singh to abandon that place and retreat to the Dakhin with 6,000 men and 60 elephants and his family and valuables. The Mughuls made pursuit and Jujhar after slaying some of his women turned on the Mughuls, but was defeated. The Bundelas were scattered in various directions and Jujhar and his son, Bikramajit, were murdered by the Gonds. Their heads were cut off and sent to Shah Jahan (December 1635) who was further gratified when it was later announced that fifty lakhs of rupees had been credited to the imperial treasury on account of spoils of the campaign. The Bundela ladies had no time to perform *jauhar* and although some of them including the venerable Rani Parbati, the widow of Bir Singh Deva, were stabbed by their males, a majority of them were taken prisoners. They were introduced into the Mughul harem to pass their days in 'gilded misery'. Two of Jujhar's sons were converted to Islam and the third was put to a brutal death because he had refused to turn a Muslim. The splendid royal temple in Orchha was destroyed and converted into a mosque, and other

temples and shrines in Bundelkhand were wantonly desecrated and demolished. Orchha was made over to Devi Singh, Jujhar's relative, who had proved traitor of his country and joined the Mughuls; but the Bundelas refused to acknowledge him as their ruler. Champat Rai of Mahoba did not submit to Devi Singh on account of his disgraceful conduct. The former's famous son, Chhatrasal, carried on for years a war of independence against the Mughuls, as a protest against Shah Jahan's policy of religious fanaticism and his unbecoming conduct towards the members of the Bundela ruling family.

Affairs in the Dakhin

On Khan Jahan's rebellion Azam Khan was appointed to take charge of the Dakhin. He opened the campaign against Ahmadnagar and captured the fort of Dharur and besieged Parenda. But in view of peculiar difficulties in southern India, he could not make any further progress in the war. The hostility between the sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur continued as before. There were conflicting views among the Bijapur officers regarding the policy to be followed towards the Mughuls, one party favouring an alliance with them while the other distrusting them as enemies. Moreover, owing to a drought supplies were not available and even grass for horses could not be procured within a range of 50 miles. But when Shah Jahan himself arrived on the scene the Mughuls succeeded in capturing the fortress of Kandhar on the eastern edge of Balaghat, clearing Berar and reducing Nasik and Sangamner. At this time Shah Jahan sustained a blow in the death of his favourite queen, Mumtaz Mahal, on January 17, 1631. She was buried in a garden near Burhanpur, but later on her remains were removed to Agra and deposited in a garden and a handsome mausoleum, known as Taj Mahal, was built over her grave.

Career of Mumtaz Mahal

Mumtaz Mahal whose original name was Arjumand Banu Begum was the daughter of Asaf Khan, son of Itmad-ud-daula and brother of Nur Jahan. She was thus Nur Jahan's niece. She was born in 1594 and was betrothed to Khurram, then in the 16th year of his age. This marriage took place in April 1612. Hardly did any marriage in a polygamous family prove so successful as this marriage. Arjumand Banu Begum captivated Shah Jahan's heart even more than Nur Jahan had done that of Jahangir.

Mumtaz Mahal shared Shah Jahan's joys and sorrows in full measure and behaved like a devoted wife during her husband's flight from the Dakhin to Orissa, Bangal and Bihar in the course of his rebellion against his father. She bore 14 out of her husband's 18 children and remained his friend and inseparable companion till her death. Promoted to be Shah Jahan's chief queen, she was given the title of Malika-i-Zamani and the royal seal was entrusted to her custody. She died in a childbirth at Burhanpur in 1631, while Shah Jahan was conducting a campaign in the Dakhin.

Mumtaz Mahal was a highly educated and accomplished woman. She possessed natural beauty of a high order which was enhanced by artificial make-up. She possessed great natural intelligence and a tender heart. Like most well-to-do ladies in the country she took delight in doing acts of kindly charity and was particularly considerate and helpful to poor widows and orphans and the distressed. Her lady-in-waiting, Sati-un-Nisa Khanum, who was her friend and adviser, encouraged and assisted the queen in her philanthropic and humanitarian endeavours. Mumtaz Mahal was a pious and religious lady, devoted to prayers, fasts and other observances enjoined by Islam. But her religious views seem to have been tinged with orthodoxy. Shah Jahan's harsh religious policy towards the Christians and Hindus is partly ascribed to Mumtaz Mahal's influence. There was hardly any Mughul queen in Indian history who was so dearly loved by her husband. The famous Taj at Agra which covers her earthly remains is the noblest movement of conjugal love and fidelity.

Affairs in the Dakhin (*continued*)

Meanwhile the affairs in the Dakhin went on badly. Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar, acted like a king-maker. He imprisoned the Sultan of Ahmadnagar and at the instigation of the imperial wazir, Asaf Khan, put him to death, replacing him by a member of the royal family, named Husain, then a boy of ten. On a second thought, however, Fateh Khan hesitated to submit to the Mughuls, but as Shah Jahan had sent a powerful army under Rustam Khan to reduce Daulatabad, he was alarmed and sent in his submission. Bijapur for sometime resisted the imperial offer and Shah Jahan was obliged to depute Asaf Khan to invade that state. The Mughuls captured Gulbarga and besieged Bijapur, but owing to great scarcity caused by a famine, Asaf Khan was obliged to abandon the siege,

and retreat to Miraj. Shah Jahan was disgusted. He recalled Asaf Khan to court and appointed Mahabat Khan to the command of the Dakhin army with instructions to conquer Bijapur.

During 1630-31 the Dakhin and Gujarat experienced a terrible famine. It spread over Khandesh also. Thousands of people died of starvation. The sufferings of the people were described by the contemporary historian, Mirza Amin Qazwini, who wrote that hunger compelled parents to consume their own children and that powder of bones was mixed with flour and dog's flesh was eaten by the people. The famine was followed by a pestilence and led to the desolation of villages and towns; streets in the towns were gutted with dead bodies, and many people fled to northern India. Shah Jahan made arrangements to alleviate human sufferings and opened public kitchens in Burhanpur, Ahmadnagar, Surat and other places for feeding the hungry. Money too was distributed. The emperor ordered a remission of government revenue to the extent of Rs. 70 lakhs. The nobles too remitted revenues in their jagirs and must also have taken steps to relieve the suffering humanity.

War with the Portuguese

The Portuguese had settled at Hooghly in Bangal, where they had obtained a strong footing nearly a hundred years before the accession of Shah Jahan to the throne of Delhi. With Hooghly as their base they traded with many places in India, China, Moluccas and Manilla. At their settlement they had a large number of converts and enjoyed practical autonomy. Some of the Portuguese indulged in piracy and also ravaged the rich districts of eastern Bangal. Inspite of their interference with the normal life of the people in the Mughul territory, the Portuguese remained unpunished during the reign of Jahangir. On Shah Jahan's accession, Qasim Khan, the new governor of Bangal, reported that the Protuguese had fortified their settlement, levied tolls on ships and had practically destroyed Satgaon. They were also guilty of piracy and slave trade. Shah Jahan was already ill-disposed towards them for their having played false to him during his rebellion against his father. They had failed to send usual presents to the new emperor on the occasion of his accession. Their greatest fault, however, was their audacity in carrying off boats which contained two slave girls belonging to queen Mumtaz Mahal. For these reasons Shah Jahan ordered Qasim Khan to take steps

to punish the haughty foreigners. The immediate occasion for the break out of hostilities was an appeal made by a Portuguese merchant named Afonso, to the governor of Bangal to help him in recovering a piece of land in Hooghly. Qasim Khan assembled a large force, collected boats and made an attack on Hooghly, both from the side of land and water. The attack was repulsed and negotiations were opened for peace. The Portuguese agreed to give up the slaves, but made some difficulties during the transaction. The Mughuls, therefore, made another attack and secured a footing in part of the settlement. The siege continued for five weeks and heavy artillery was brought up for bombardment. The Portuguese, therefore, felt obliged to open fresh negotiations and to pay two lakhs of rupees to the Mughuls. But no treaty could be concluded and the besieged found their position untenable and decided to evacuate the town in their boats. Before they could embark they were attacked by the Mughuls and a running fight took place. About 3,000 of the Portuguese escaped and 400 of them were taken prisoners and brought to Agra. They were asked to embrace Islam, but refused to do so and were, therefore, imprisoned. Shah Jahan's harsh policy towards the Portuguese can be justified on political grounds, for these had surely given an adequate cause for imperial resentment. But his desire to convert the prisoners to Islam was inspired by religious intolerance and, therefore, deserved condemnation.

Affairs in the Dakhin (*continued*)

Meanwhile warfare in the Dakhin went on in a leisurely fashion. Shahji, father of Shivaji, had submitted to the Mughuls and had been rewarded with grants of lands, then held by Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar. After Fateh Khan had, in compliance with Asaf Khan's instructions, murdered his master the Nizam Shahi king, he was restored to these lands. This enraged Shahji who offered his services to the king of Bijapur promising to take Daulatabad from Fateh Khan. Fateh Khan was alarmed and promised to make over the fortress to the Mughul general Mahabat Khan and to enter the Mughul service in person. Mahabat Khan welcomed the offer and defeated a Bijapur army, but the Bijapur general Ran Daula Khan, though defeated in the battle, persuaded Fateh Khan by a huge bribe to break away from the Mughuls. Thereupon, Mahabat Khan decided to besiege the fortress of Daulatabad, which he

captured in 1663 after a siege of three months and a half. Fateh Khan yielded up the fortress with all the guns and ammunitions of war and Mahabat Khan allowed Nizam Shahi ladies to evacuate the fort. Fateh Khan and the boy-king, Husain Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar, were sent to court. The king was imprisoned for life in the fortress of Gwalior, and Fateh Khan was given a pension and permitted to live at Lahore. But the capture of Daulatabad did not bring about a complete extinction of the Ahmadnagar kingdom. Some of its territories, such as parts of the Balaghat region, continued to remain in the hands of Ahmadnagar officers who were loyal to a sultan, who was enthroned in place of Hussain Nizam Shah by the Maratha chief, Shahji. The northern half of the present Poona district and the whole of Konkan were in possession of the Marathas who under Shahji harassed the Mughuls. Mahabat Khan made arrangements for the capture of Parenda and for sending another army to force Shahji back to Junnar. Inspite of his best efforts, he failed to capture Parenda and retired to Burhanpur with prince Shuja who was nominal head of the Mughul forces in the Dakhin. Shah Jahan upbraided Mahabat Khan for this failure and the latter died in October 1634.

The recall of the Mughul troops from the Dakhin again caused confusion in the affairs of that province. Besides the Maratha depredations, there was no cessation of the intrigues at the court of Bijapur. Shah Jahan, therefore, set out early in 1636 to recommence operations and, if possible, to reduce Bijapur and Golkunda. On his arrival at Daulatabad, he sent letters to the king of Bijapur asking him to make a regular payment of tribute and to turn out from Bijapur the Marathas and other supporters of the Ahmadnagar dynasty. As these demands were not fully complied with, Shah Jahan decided to invade Bijapur and detached a force to commence operations. The Sultan was frightened, reopened negotiations and agreed to conclude a fresh treaty, the terms of which were dictated by Shah Jahan. Bijapur acknowledged the Mughul supremacy and agreed to pay an annual tribute of 20 lakhs of rupees. It further agreed to remain friendly with Golkunda and to submit its disputes with that state to the arbitration of the emperor. As a result of this treaty, the boundary of the old kingdom of Ahmadnagar was defined and Bijapur was confirmed in the possession of Parenda and the Konkan. Bijapur bound itself to assist the Mughuls against Shahji, if the latter did not surrender the territory near Junnar and Trimbak.

This treaty was signed in May 1636 and remained in force till November, 1656.

Shah Jahan now turned to Golkunda. It was not difficult to settle terms with this state, as its king was more complaisant than the sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. Moreover, Golkunda had shown friendship to Shah Jahan, while he was in rebellion against his father. Abdulla Qutub Khan, the new ruler of Golkunda, had sent presents to Shah Jahan, when he had appeared in the Dakhin early in 1631 to suppress the rebellion of Khan Jahan Lodi. The sultan had also refrained from assisting Bijapur while the latter was attacked by Mahabat Khan. There was, however, one obstacle to the real friendship between the two. Shah Jahan was a strict Sunni, while the Sultan of Golkunda was a Shia and recognised the Shah of Persia as his suzerain. Shah Jahan, therefore, demanded the abolition of Shia practices in Golkunda and the exclusion of the name of the Shah of Persia from the *Khutba*. The sultan complied after some hesitation and slight show of resistance. Shah Jahan's name was inserted in the *Khutba*. The Mughul troops were now withdrawn from the frontier and a fresh treaty was concluded. The terms of the treaty were that the Shia formula in the *Khutba* was to be abolished, Shah Jahan's name was to be inscribed on coins, and the *Khutba* was to be read in his name. The sultan agreed to pay an annual tribute of two lakhs of Hun, equivalent to six lakhs of rupees. He also promised to discharge all arrears of tribute and assist the Mughuls against Bijapur, if the latter declared war against the former. This treaty was concluded in May 1636.

The third problem in the Dakhin was the subjugation of the hardy Marathas who under their leader Shahji had acquired great political and military importance. On entering the Dakhin Shah Jahan despatched an army under Khan Zaman to occupy the homeland of Shahji, which was situated south and south-east of Ahmadnagar, and then to clear the Konkan of the Marathas. At the same time, a division under Shayista Khan was sent to invade the district to the north and west of Ahmadnagar. While Shayista Khan accomplished his task, Khan Zaman, who was pitted against Shahji, failed in the enterprise. Shahji had prepared to join the Bijapur army and to cross the river Bhima to be in readiness to give battle to Khan Zaman, but the latter was ordered not to pursue Shahji. Meanwhile, peace was made between the Mughuls and Bijapur and Khan Zaman proceeded to take Junnar from Shahji. Bijapur tried

to persuade Shahji to surrender Junnar to the Mughuls, but the Maratha chief refused to comply. The Mughuls, therefore, had to invest Junnar and Shahji surrendered the fortress, but not without fighting. He delivered to the Mughuls the boy whom he had enthroned as king of Ahmadnagar. This ex-ruler was sent to Gwalior to be imprisoned there. Shahji entered the service of Bijapur. For a time, the Mughuls were thus able to settle the affairs of the Dakhin to their satisfaction.

Kandhar surrendered to Shah Jahan, 1638

For more than one hundred years the strong fortress of Kandhar had been a bone of contention between the Mughul rulers of India and the Shahs of Persia. The fortress was lost to the Mughuls during the last years of Jahangir's reign. Shah Jahan naturally was anxious to recover it at the earliest opportunity. He tried to impress the Persian monarch with his own ability and strength by receiving Persian envoys with great pomp and costly gifts, and sending exaggerated accounts of his own success against the rebels and the sultans of the Dakhin. Shah Abbas, the great Persian ruler who died about a year after Shah Jahan's accession, was succeeded by a minor, whose attention was diverted by a war with the Turks. Ali Mardan Khan, the governor of Kandhar, was not on good terms with the Persian court, as Saru Taqi, the Persian minister, had demanded from him a statement of account of the income and expenditure of his governorship and sent troops to ensure compliance. To evade this Ali Mardan Khan intrigued with the Mughul officers in Kabul and offered to surrender Kandhar to Shah Jahan. Early in 1638, he transferred his services to the Mughul emperor and admitted Indian troops into the fortress. Shah Jahan's name now appeared in the *Khutba* and on the coins in Kandhar. The district of Kandhar was occupied by the Mughul troops without much difficulty. Ali Mardan was richly rewarded and sometime after appointed governor of Kashmir.

Some minor conquests

The Mughuls had coveted the inhospitable region known as Tibat for about a hundred years and made unsuccessful attempts to capture it. Jahangir's expedition had been repulsed with great loss. Shah Jahan, following in the footsteps of his father, renewed the project. In 1634 he sent an expedition against Abdal, ruler of Balkistan, or little Tibat. The immediate cause of the outbreak of

hostility was the offence given by Abdal, who had given shelter to the Chakks from Kashmir. Abdal submitted. But sometime after he repudiated allegiance to the emperor and therefore another expedition was sent against him, which made Abdal pay a war indemnity and surrender the leader of the Chakks. One year after, news was received that Tibat Proper was hostile and so another army had to be despatched. The Tibatians were defeated and peace was restored on the northern frontier.

Some other minor conquests were made. At the end of 1637 the region known as Baglan, now in the Nasik district, was conquered. The Portuguese were besieged in Daman and Diu and were compelled to submit. There was a rebellion in Kangara in the Panjab. Jagat Singh, who was its governor, had repudiated the Mughul authority, but was obliged to submit early in 1642. Champat Rai, the new Bundela chief, revolted in Bundelkhand. Abdulla Khan was directed to reduce him to submission. The Mughul army surprised the Bundela chief between Orchha and Jhansi, and although Champat Rai escaped, his adopted son Prithvi Raj was taken prisoner and sent to be lodged in the fort of Gwalior. In May 1642, Champat Rai was persuaded to submit and enter the Mughul service.

The country lying south of Ganga and east of Bundelkhand was brought under control. The chief of Baghelkhand, named Lachhman Singh, also submitted. The Cheros, an aboriginal tribe of Palamau in Bihar, also acknowledged the Mughul suzerainty. In April 1643, the Gonds and Bhils of Malwa, who were in rebellion, were suppressed.

Central Asian policy of Shah Jahan

The Mughul emperors always cherished a desire to conquer and occupy Trans-Oxiana, their ancestral homeland in Central Asia. Babur's successive attempts had failed to recover Samarqand, the capital of his great ancestor Timur. Humayun's efforts in that direction had proved futile. Akbar and Jahangir also entertained the same ambition, but had not been in a position to make an attempt to establish the Mughul rule in that inhospitable region. It was left to Shah Jahan to make an endeavour for the conquest of Samarqand, which was then under the Janids of Astrakhan. Shah Jahan's contemporary on the throne of Samarqand was Imam Quli, an ambitious ruler who cast covetous eyes on Kabul. Taking

advantage of the confusion in India in the months following the accession of Shah Jahan, the Uzbegs under Nazr Muhammad, brother of Imam Quli, led an expedition against Kabul. He acquired partial success in the campaign; but with the advance of summer he had to withdraw, as his troops were reluctant to follow him in the inclement weather. Next year (May 1629) Nazr Muhammad repeated his raid on the Kabul territory and captured Bamian, but failed to make any further progress and had to retire. These raids on the Mughul territory naturally caused resentment in India. But Nazr Muhammad apologised and relations were re-established between the two neighbours.

In 1639, Shah Jahan decided to retaliate and planned an expedition against the Uzbegs of Samarqand. At the back of his mind there was the ancestral ambition of re-establishing the Mughul rule over Trans-Oxiana. The occasion was furnished by confusion in the affairs of that country. Nazr Muhammad had deposed his brother Imam Quli who had lost his sight. But he was not popular and had picked a quarrel with religious leaders. The situation was further complicated when a rebellion occurred in Khwarizm or Khiva and Nazr Muhammad sent his son Abdul Aziz to quell it (1645). Abdul Aziz rebelled against his father and proclaimed himself Khan of Bukhara and Nazr Muhammad was obliged to take refuge in Balkh. These internal dissensions in Trans-Oxiana gave Shah Jahan an opportunity to interfere and thereby endeavour to realise the age-long Mughul ambition. The governor of Kabul was directed to take advantage of the difficulties of the Uzbegs. He sent an army and captured the fort of Kahmard which was however lost soon after and the operation came to an end with the advent of winter. The Mughul interference obliged Nazr Muhammad to make up his quarrel with his son, and it was agreed that he should retain Balkh, while Bukhara should go to Abdul Aziz. Nazr Muhammad even appealed to Shah Jahan for help which was promised in dubious terms. Shah Jahan welcomed the opportunity to bring Samarqand, Balkh and Bukhara under his possession. He visited Kabul and collected a large army and planned a comprehensive campaign against the Uzbegs. Murad was given charge of the expedition. The army, however, did not start until the middle of June when the prince entered Narin and Qunduz, which were taken. The emperor's policy was to help Nazr Muhammad to recover Bukhara and Samarqand and then to wrest them from

his hands. It was not difficult for Nazr Muhammad to see through Shah Jahan's designs and consequently the former tried to obstruct the advance of the Mughul army. He even pretended to agree to resign his territory to the Mughuls and declare that he was making preparations for going to Mecca. Murad guessed the meanings of these professions and began his campaign against Balkh in July 1646. On his approach, Nazr Muhammad fled and the Mughul army captured Balkh, secured a large treasure and plundered the city. The next acquisition was Tirmiz on the Oxus. After this the imperial army defeated Nazr Muhammad at Shivarghan. Nazr Muhammad fled to Marv and then to Persia. Shah Jahan was highly pleased at the success and celebrated the occasion by issuing coins at Balkh. But his joy proved to be premature, for Murad who was accustomed to a life of luxurious pleasures in India, did not like the barren country and the rigorous climate of Central Asia and begged to be recalled. The emperor was a little disappointed and resorted to diplomacy. He wrote to Nazr Muhammad that his only object in undertaking the expedition was to clear Balkh of dangerous people, and then to hand it over to him. Prince Murad had exceeded his orders, he added, on account of youth and inexperience. To Shah Abbas II of Persia he wrote congratulating him on his accession and requesting his neutrality during the Mughul expedition to Central Asia. The imperial diplomacy failed in its object. The Persian Shah did not remain neutral, and Nazr Muhammad was not deceived by sweet words. Although Murad was replaced by Aurangzeb, the Mughul army found its progress obstructed by tribesmen. Abdul Aziz had strengthened his position and collected a large army on the Oxus. As Aurangzeb arrived at Balkh, Abdul Aziz prepared to fight. Another Uzbeg army proceeded to invade Balkh from another direction. Aurangzeb was obliged to fight a pitched battle with Abdul Aziz, in which the latter was defeated. Aurangzeb's cool courage and bravery impressed the Uzbegs. The prince had dismounted from his horse and offered his sun-set prayers on the field of battle. Consequently, Abdul Aziz was in a mood to treat and offered to place Bukhara in the hands of his brother. Nazr Muhammad wrote from Persia offering to abdicate. But the Mughul success was more illusory than real. Aurangzeb had not been able to advance beyond the Oxus. His officers were reluctant to stay and fight in the rigorous climate of Trans-Oxiana. They found the country desolate. Even Aurangzeb

wanted to return to India, for he was fired with the ambition of succeeding his father as emperor. The Uzbegs, who seem to have been aware of the difficulties and sentiments of the Mughul commander and other officers, persevered on in their hostility to the invaders. Nazr Muhammad returned from Persia and attaked the Mughul out-posts in Afghanistan. He received help and encouragement from the Shah of Persia who was desirous of recovering Kandhar from the Mughuls. Aurangzeb felt obliged to cut short his progress into Trans-Oxiana and turn back to repel the Uzbeg attack on Afghanistan. Shah Jahan advised the prince to accept an apology, if Nazr Muhammad offered one. Such an apology was made by Nazr Muhammad not personally, but through his grandson. The Mughul garrison in the out-posts slackened their vigilance under the mistaken notion that Nazr Muhammad was to be restored to his country. Aurangzeb had to return to Kabul and was harassed on the way by bands of Uzbegs.

Shah Abbas II of Persia had now openly taken up the cause of the Uzbegs. In 1648, he demanded the restoration of Kandhar from Shah Jahan. He also urged the emperor to restore Balkh to Nazr Muhammad. The Shah prepared to back his diplomacy with force and proceeded to Khurasan and besieged it. The Mughuls had already abandoned Balkh.

Loss of Kandhar, 1649

Shah Abbas II was gratified at the failure of Shah Jahan's campaign in Central Asia, as it weakened the Mughul authority in the North-Western frontier of the Indian empire and gave him an opportunity to recover Kandhar. In 1648 the Shah, who had now attained majority, took the reins of government in his hands and made preparations for an expedition to Kandhar. Proceeding from Khurasan, he arrived in the vicinity of Kandhar and invested the fortress of Bist. The news impelled Shah Jahan to gather a strong force which was placed under the command of Aurangzeb and was instructed to proceed immediately to save the city and the fortress. Meanwhile the Persian army captured the fortress of Bist after a short siege and then invested Kandhar itself. The garrison under Daulat Khan, its governor, lost heart thinking that no relief from Delhi was likely to arrive in time. Some of the troops in the fortress, anxious to save themselves and their families, opened correspondence with the besiegers and Daulat Khan was not power-

ful enough to put down the sedition with a strong hand. In fact, he himself eventually joined the dispirited garrison and surrendered the fort to the Persians in February 1649, a month before Aurangzeb was able to reach Kabul enroute for Kandhar. Shah Jahan was indignant and urged Aurangzeb to hurry up and recover the valuable frontier outpost. The emperor himself advanced to Kabul to hearten the troops by his presence in the near vicinity of the scene of action.

Accompanied by wazir Sadullah Khan the prince at the head of 50,000 troops proceeded by way of Ghazni and arrived near Kandhar in May 1649 and besieged the fortress. Fighting continued throughout the summer, but the Mughuls failed to make an impression on the besieged who were reinforced by fresh troops from Persia. The Mughul army suffered greatly for lack of proper organisation and supplies and ammunition. They were further handicapped for want of big battering cannons. Winter was fast approaching and it was considered useless to continue the struggle. The emperor, therefore, recalled the expedition. Aurangzeb abandoned the siege and in September 1649 left for Lahore.

In 1652 Shah Jahan decided to renew his attempt for the recovery of Kandhar, and once again entrusted the task to Aurangzeb who was anxious to wipe off the disgrace of his defeat and failure of 1649. A powerful army with many big pieces of artillery, war elephants and camels and two crores of rupees for expenditure were placed at the disposal of the prince. The second siege of Kandhar commenced on 22nd May, 1652 and lasted for two months and ten days. The Mughul bravery proved to be of no avail before the better-served Persian artillery. Moreover, the Uzbegs threatened Ghazni which lay on the route between Kandhar and Kabul. Shah Jahan fearing a combination between the Persians and the Uzbegs ordered Aurangzeb to raise the siege and return to court. The prince's request to prolong the operations was refused and he was recalled and appointed governor of the Dakhin.

The emperor now entrusted the recovery of Kandhar to Dara who rejoiced over Aurangzeb's double failure and boasted that he would conquer the fortress within a week. The crown prince with a grand army, a huge park of artillery and one crore of rupees for his expenses set out in February 1653 and tried to occupy the surrounding country, so as to prevent the supplies and reinforcement from reaching the Persian garrison. He succeeded in recovering Bist and Girishk

which lay to the west of Kandhar. He laid waste the country around, closely invested Kandhar and ordered a fierce bombardment. The concentration of attack on selected points of the rampart caused some parts of the wall to be shattered; but the Mughul army found it impossible to force an entry on account of murderous fire from the more efficient and better-served Persian guns. Nevertheless Dara's success was much greater than that of Aurangzeb during the two previous sieges and it frightened the Persians. Unfortunately, however, winter came on which put the besieged in a favourable condition. Moreover, The Mughul ammunitions and supplies ran short. It was, therefore, decided to withdraw the army early in October 1653.

The there sieges of Kandhar (1649, 1652 and 1653) sapped the resources of the empire. They cost about 12 crores of rupees without any compensating advantage. Not an inch of territory was added to the imperial dominions. In fact, the empire lost not only the impregnable fortress of Kandhar, but also a large extent of territory around it. Quite a large number of men and beast of burden perished in the enterprise. The political and military prestige of the empire suffered greatly and revealed the inefficiency of Shah Jahan's military organisation. The Shah of Persia naturally felt elated on account of his success against the mighty ruler of Delhi and during succeeding years Persia entertained the ambition of invading the fertile plains of Hindustan which kept the Mughuls in a state of anxiety. During the remaining days of Shah Jahan's life, the relations between the two countries were very much strained.

War with Golkunda and Bijapur : Aurangzeb's Second Viceroyalty, 1652—1657

In November 1652, Aurangzeb was for the second time appointed governor of the Mughul Dakhin. He had been in-charge of that region from 1641 to 1644, and it was, therefore, his second viceroyalty of the Dakhin. Earnest in his devotion to duty the prince first of all tried to improve the finances of the suba and with the help of Murshid Quli Khan, his Diwan, who was a man of great administrative ability and financial genius, carried out a fresh and equitable revenue settlement. Murshid Quli Khan introduced the principle of Todar Mal's revenue system, measured the land and fixed the state demand on the basis of the soil. He realised that a uniform system for the entire country was impossible and therefore made

due allowance for local tradition and usage. Side by side with *zabti*, *batai* and *nasq* were allowed to continue. The state share ranged from one-half in the *batai* areas to one-fourth in those where the system of measurement could not be introduced. These measures improved the condition of the peasants and increased the resources of the province. The prince had already brought about a redistribution of assignments of land among his officers with the permission of the emperor. He was now in a position to attend to political affairs.

Following in the footsteps of his ancestors Aurangzeb planned the destruction of the kingdoms of Golkunda and Bijapur. In view of the clear Mughul policy of extending the empire so as to embrace the entire peninsula, it was not difficult to find a pretext for an attack on these two Shia kingdoms. Golkunda was a rich state, and besides professing Shia faith, which Aurangzeb and his father considered it their religious duty to put down, the sultan had recently conquered the province of Karnatak. This conquest was not recognized by the emperor who demanded a large sum of money for the alleged crime. Moreover, Golkunda had failed to discharge its obligation of paying the annual tribute in accordance with the treaty of 1636. But the immediate cause of the war was the arrest by the sultan of Mir Jumla's son, Muhammad Amin, who appealed to Aurangzeb for assistance. Mir Jumla whose original name was Mir Muhammad Sayeed was a native of Ardistan and had come to Golkunda as the servant of a jewel merchant. After his master's death, he inherited his vast fortune. His wealth and ability attracted the attention of Abdulla Qutub Shah of Golkunda who appointed him as his prime minister and conferred upon him the title of Mir Jumla. Mir Jumla was an extremely ambitious politician. He increased his wealth by plundering Hindu temples and working diamond mines and recruited a personal army consisting of 5,000 well-armed cavalry and 20,000 infantry, besides a powerful park of artillery and some war elephants. He conquered Karnatak for himself and defeated the Raja of Chandragiri. Thus he ruled over a dominion of his own which he converted into an *imperium in imperio*. His ambition, wealth and overbearing conduct alarmed the sultan of Golkunda who wanted to put him under arrest and blind him. Mir Jumla got wind of his designs, refused to attend the court and opened negotiations with Bijapur, Persia and prince Aurangzeb, viceroy of the Dakhin. Meanwhile, his son Muhammad Amin gave offence to the sultan by his overbearing conduct in the open

darbar and was, therefore, put under arrest along with his family. His property was confiscated. This happened on 1st December, 1655. Aurangzeb took advantage of the incident and after obtaining his father's permission to invade Golkunda demanded from the Qutub Shah the release of Muhammad Amin and his family and in the event of refusal threatened the sultan with an invasion of his country. Without waiting for reply the prince declared war and deputed his son Prince Muhammad at the head of a large army in January 1656 to invade Golkunda. As this army advanced within his territory, the sultan made profession of obedience and released Mir Jumla's property and marched on Hyderabad. The sultan was alarmed; he removed his treasures to the strong fort of Golkunda, a few miles from Hyderabad, made an attempt to bribe Prince Muhammad and got together his troops to defend his territory. The prince, however, defeated the Golkunda army and besieged Hyderabad. He put the sultan's agents who had brought him the bribe in the shape of jewels and other valuables to death and captured Hyderabad after a short siege. The helpless sultan made fresh professions of allegiance, sent to the prince more jewels and other valuable articles and released the property of Mir Jumla and at the same time sought assistance from Bijapur in order to defend his strong fortress of Golkunda from the invaders.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb had besieged the fortress of Golkunda (February 1656). The siege lasted for some time and the sultan Abdulla Qutub Shah was frightened and begged permission to send his own mother to beg pardon for his offence. The aged lady pleaded forgiveness, whereupon Aurangzeb promised to restore the kingdom of Golkunda to her son on condition that he should clear all arrears of tribute, pay an indemnity of one crore of rupees and give his daughter in marriage to Prince Muhammad. While negotiations were going on in the Dakhin, the sultan's agents were waiting on Shah Jahan at Agra through Dara and Jahanara. Consequently, when Aurangzeb was about to press the siege, he received orders from his father to withdraw from Golkunda and pardon the sultan. Aurangzeb kept the emperor's orders secret and continued the siege and raised it only after the sultan had restored Mir Jumla's property and promised to clear off the arrears of tribute and to perform the marriage of his daugher with Muhammad. Mir Jumla interviewed the prince and was received with honours. The marriage of the sultan's daughter with Muhammad was also celebrated and a dowry

of ten lakhs of rupees was given. A fresh treaty was entered into with Golkunda. The sultan swore on the Quran never to disobey the Mughul emperor in future and was thereupon pardoned. He was to pay an indemnity of 15 lakhs of rupees. By this treaty the sultan became a vassal of the Mughul emperor. Mir Jumla who was the primary cause of the humiliation of his master was given an honourable post in the Mughul service and after the death of wazir Sadullah Khan was promoted to be the prime minister of the empire.

After his success against Golkunda, Aurangzeb turned his attention towards the kingdom of Bijapur which had enjoyed peace for 20 years and was treated virtually as an independent state. Its ruler Muhammad Adil Shah was an able monarch and had the foresight to maintain friendly relations with the ruler of Delhi. He had extended his territory from sea to sea, consolidated his administration and increased his revenue. His success excited the jealousy of Shah Jahan who rebuked him for his presumptuousness. The sultan who was not prepared to go to war with the emperor tendered an apology and gave up the display of court ceremonials of the Mughul type responsible for Shah Jahan's reproofs. Adil Shah died in November 1656 and was succeeded by his son Ali Adil Shah II, then a boy of 18.

The change of government in Bijapur caused confusion in its affairs. Factions arose at the court and a rebellion broke out in the eastern province of the kingdom. Aurangzeb took advantage of these developments and successfully intrigued to win the allegiance of some of the disaffected Bijapuri nobles. He obtained Shah Jahan's permission to invade Bijapur on the plea that Ali Adil Shah II was not the son of the late ruler, but was a boy of spurious origin. Being an independent kingdom, the Mughul emperor had no right to interfere with the internal affairs of Bijapur, much less to question the succession of its ruler. Aurangzeb's interference with that kingdom was, therefore, wanton aggression, pure and simple. His object was the complete subjugation of that independent kingdom.

Assisted by Mir Jumla who possessed local knowledge, Aurangzeb invaded Bijapur and besieged the fortress of Bidar, situated on a rocky eminence and well-supplied with arms and ammunition. Sidi Marjan, the commandant of the fort, put up a brave resistance, but the besiegers succeeded in filling the moat round the fortress and damaging its walls by a fierce bombardment. Fortunately for Aurangzeb a rocket caused an explosion in the fort as a result of

which Sidi Marjan was mortally wounded. The Mughuls now made a dash into the fortress and put up their flags on its ramparts. The dying commander sent the keys of the fort to the prince. The fortress thus passed into the possession of the Mughuls after a siege of 27 days.

After this success Aurangzeb sent forward Mahabat Khan at the head of 15,000 well-equipped cavalry to meet the Bijapur army which had assembled at Gulburga. The Bijapuris were defeated and dispersed, and Aurangzeb was able to advance to Kalyani, the ancient capital of the Chalukyas, situated forty miles west of Bidar. The town was besieged, but the Mughuls were stoutly opposed and their lines of communication were threatened. Eventually, Aurangzeb's superior generalship and perseverance succeeded in inflicting a defeat on the Bijapur force, and capturing Kalyani by assault in August 1657. The prince was preparing to undertake further operations with a view to bring about the extinction of the Bijapur kingdom when the emperor's orders to call off the campaign arrived. The importunity of the Bijapur agents at the Delhi court, Dara's jealousy of Aurangzeb and the emperor's failing health were responsible for Shah Jahan's decision to recall the army to the headquarters. In compliance with the imperial orders negotiations were commenced and terms were quickly settled. The sultan agreed to pay an indemnity of one and a half crores of rupees and to surrender to the empire the forts of Bidar, Kalyani and Perenda and also those in the Konkan and Vangi. Shah Jahan approved of the settlement and was generous enough to remit half a crore of the indemnity. Aurangzeb withdrew to Bidar and began preparations for the war of succession which was about to ensue on account of Shah Jahan's failing health. The sultan of Bijapur took advantage of the change in the political situation and declined to fulfil the terms of the treaty of 1657.

While Aurangzeb was conducting his compaign against Golkunda and Bijapur, the Marathas who had so far not proved dangerous to the Mughuls, were emerging into importance. Their young leader Shivaji, son of Sahji Bhonsle, was at this very time entering upon a career of conquest and independence. Shahji was obliged to enter the service of Bijapur and Shivaji also promised to help the Mughuls in their war against Bijapur in return for a part of the territory which had to be conquered from that kingdom. But as the Mughuls did not assist him in conquering it, Shivaji avoided

joining them, and while Aurangzeb was occupied with the two Dakhin kingdoms, he captured Junnar and raided the Mughul territory west of Ahmadnagar. Aurangzeb was obliged to make arrangements for putting down Shivaji's raids on his western flank. A detachment of the Mughul army defeated Shivaji. Nevertheless, the latter continued raiding the Mughul territory. When Aurangzeb made peace with Bijapur and withdrew his army from that state, Shivaji also abandoned his raids and made peace with the Mughuls and submitted to them.

The War of Succession, 1657—1659

Shah Jahan fell ill in September 1657 and rumour spread that he was dead. Believing that his death was approaching, he executed his will bequeathing the empire to his eldest son Dara, who was called upon to conduct the administration in the name of the emperor during the latter's illness. The emperor's other sons, however, being apprised of their father's illness, decided to contest for the throne. Shah Jahan had four sons, Dara Shukoh, Shah Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad Bakhsh. All these were grown up men and governors of provinces with considerable resources and following. Dara, at the time of his father's illness, was governor of the Panjab and Delhi, but he usually resided with his father who had removed to Agra in October 1657 for a change of climate. Shuja was governor of Bangal, Aurangzeb, that of the Dakhin and Murad of Gujarat. Though born of the same mother the brothers were not on good terms and each of them coveted the throne. The three younger princes were jealous of Dara who was designated heir-apparent by the emperor and marked out for succession to the throne. He held liberal religious views, was friendly to Hindus and popular with the Rajput aristocracy. Shuja had leanings towards Shiaism, while Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni and bitterly hostile to non-Muslims. Murad, though a Sunni like Aurangzeb, was more or less indifferent to religious dogma.

When the rumours of the empror's fatal illness reached the princes, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad began making preparations for a war against Dara who was at Agra by the side of his ailing father. Murad in Gujarat was the first to murder his minister Ali Naqi to assume the title of emperor and to strike coins in his own name. Shuja, who for many years had ruled Bangal with success, proceeded towards Agra at the head of a big army to fight Dara and occupy the

throne. Both these entered into correspondence with Aurangzeb who was clever enough to conceal his intentions and projects which were to overpower all his brothers and seize the throne for himself. With consummate cunning, he tried to make use of Shuja and Murad to further his own interest. While keeping in touch with the developments at the imperial court at Agra, through his trusted agents and specially his sister Raushanara, he posted his troops at the ferries on the Narmada so as to prevent news of his own preparations and movements reaching northern India. With the help of Mir Jumla, whom he did not allow to proceed to Agra, Aurangzeb began making preparations, winning over officers and troops and gathering other materials of war. Unlike Murad he was not prepared to break openly with his father or elder brother. He announced that he was preparing to proceed to Agra to see his ailing father and tried to conciliate Golkunda and Bijapur and even to win them over to his interest.

Aurangzeb entered into correspondence with Murad, advised him to act cautiously and not to break out into an open revolt. He found fault with Murad for besieging Surat and assuming the title of king. The two brothers entered into an agreement that they would unite to put down Dara who had become an apostate from Islam and after their victory would divide the empire between them ; the Panjab, Afganistan, Kashmir and Sind would go to Murad, while the remaining country would pass into the hands of Aurangzeb. It was further agreed that one-third of the booty would belong to Murad and two-thirds to Aurangzeb. The brothers were to march out of their provinces, effect a junction with their troops, and proceed to Agra to fight Dara.

While Aurangzeb and Murad were concerting measures for a war against Dara, Shuja in Bangal was carrying out his coronation at Raj-Mahal. This done, he started for Agra at the head of a large army and reached Banaras early in February 1658. Dara whose plan was to crush Murad and Shuja and then to march against Aurangzeb, despatched his eldest son, Sulaiman Shukoh, with Raja Jai Singh of Amber to deal with Shuja. The two armies met on 24th February, 1658 at Bahadurpur, five miles north-east of Banaras, and fought a hotly contested battle in which Shuja was defeated with great slaughter. He left the field and fled towards Bangal. Jai Singh pursued Shuja to the border of Bangal.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb had matured his plan. He secured his object by converting Golkunda and Bijapur into his friends and

offering Shivaji grants of lands in the Dakhin. He sought to distract Dara's attention by inciting the Persian Shah to invade Afghanistan, then a province of the Indian empire. By February 1658, his preparations which included employment of European gunners in his service were completed. He left Aurangabad and after a month's stay at Burhanpur, crossed the Narmada and reached Dipalpur where he was joined by Murad. The two princes then proceeded to Dharmat, 14 miles south-west of Ujjain.

On the news of the advance of his brothers from the Dakhin and Gujarat, Dara sent an army under Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and Qasim Khan to meet them and, if possible, to persuade them to return to their respective provinces. The imperial army suffered from the divided command and lack of intelligence, and failed to produce the desired impression on the rebellious princes. Aurangzeb sent a message to Jaswant Singh asking him to withdraw, as his proposed visit was only to see his father. The latter replied by advancing towards Aurangzeb's army. It was then that he learnt that Murad had joined Aurangzeb. It was too late to talk peace and a battle was fought at Dharmat on 25th April, 1658. The Rajputs under Jaswant Singh attacked the rebel forces with bravery, but failed to win the battle, as the imperial troops were badly organised and led. Many of Jaswant Singh's officers lost their lives and he himself was wounded and was forcibly removed from the field by his trusted followers. In the army commanded by Qasim Khan, only one high Muslim officer lost his life and four of them went over to the side of Aurangzeb on the next day. It is said that when Jaswant Singh reached Jodhpur, his spirited queen refused to admit him into the castle for it was un-Rajput-like for the head of the Rathors to have fled from the field for the sake of saving his life.

After his victory at Dharmat which enhanced Aurangzeb's prestige, he laid the foundation of a new town near the site of the battle and named it Fatehabad. He then proceeded toward Gwalior en-route for Agra, crossed the Chambal and arrived at the head of a powerful force at Samugarh, a village eight miles east of Agra Fort, to give battle to his victorious brothers. The crown prince was badly upset by the news of the disaster of Dharmat and the quick advance of Aurangzeb to the vicinity of Agra. Dara, therefore, made a vigorous attempt to collect as many troops as he could and with Shah Jahan's permission to proceed in person to decide the contest for the throne one way or the other. His

advance guard was under his trusted Rajput nobles, while his right and left wings were commanded by Khalilullah Khan and Siphir Shukoh, Dara's younger son respectively. Dara himself seated on a lofty elephant, took up his position in the centre which he commanded in person. As usual the prince's army was handicapped for want of harmony among its various part and on account of Aurangzeb's intrigue to seduce its Muslim commanders.

Dara committed the mistake of not launching an immediate attack on Aurangzeb whose troops were exhausted on account of continuous marching and postponing battle for the next day which gave the enemy troops time to recoup themselves by rest during the night. When the battle began the next day (June 8, 1658), he ordered his guns to waste their fire, for Aurangzeb's troops had not arrived within range. The imperial left wing launched an attack on Aurangzeb's right which the latter, who had reserved their fire, succeeded in repelling. The next charge was made on the enemy centre, which was taken on itself by Aurangzeb's reserve, which in turn defeated the imperial left wing killing its commander, Rustam Khan. The right wing of Dara commanded by Khalilullah, who seemed to have been in collusion with the enemy, made a half-hearted attack on Murad. His attempt was seconded by the Rajputs from the centre. They pushed on to Murad's division and attacked him with vigour. Murad received three arrow wounds in the face and his driver fell dead before him. Murad was ultimately forced back and the Rajputs advanced further and made an attack on a group of troops commanded by Aurangzeb in person. The Rajputs were defeated, but Aurangzeb was so much impressed by their bravery and devotion, that he refrained from making a short work of his brave though beaten opponents. While his right wing was thus being pushed out of the field, Dara was proceeding to reinforce his left wing, whose commander Rustam Khan had fallen on the field. From the centre he moved to the front of his right wing, with the result that he came in front of his own artillery, which had consequently to be silenced. As he was drawn to one corner of the field, he lost touch with the operations in other parts. Aurangzeb who had reserved his fire now ordered his artillery to play on Dara. While the enemy guns were moving forward to encircle him, Dara found his heavily armed troops exhausted by the heat of the summer and himself on a huge elephant a target of Aurangzeb's guns. On the advice of his officers he dismounted from his elephant and took his seat on a

horse. From the empty *howda*, his troops thought that he was dead. They were exhausted by fighting as well as extreme heat and they now broke and fled for safety. Dara was dismayed and escaped on horse-back, losing 10,000 of his troops in the battle. Besides these, quite a good number perished from heat or exhaustion. On arrival at Agra he was so much struck by shame that he declined to meet his father and taking his family and a handful of followers, he left for Delhi in order to gather an army there and make a fresh attempt to oppose his victorious brothers.

The astute Aurangzeb ascribed the victory to Murad, had his wounds dressed and declared that the latter was now the emperor whose reign should begin immediately. The brothers now marched towards Agra and encamped outside its wall. Most of the imperial nobles and officers abandoned the losing side and went over to join the victorious princes. Shah Jahan invited Aurangzeb to a meeting. At first, he agreed to see his father, but being suspicious by nature, he feared an ambush and so declined to meet Shah Jahan. He occupied the city and posted his troops round the fort. Afraid of his life Shah Jahan closed the gates of the fort and prepared to defend it. Aurangzeb laid siege and ordered his guns to better the fort walls, but the fire proved ineffective as the fort was almost impregnable by assault. Not being in a position to lose time Aurangzeb cut off the fort's water supply from the Yamuna so as to compel his father to surrender. The wells inside the fort contained brakish water and caused distress to the imperial family and garrison. Shah Jahan was compelled once again to appeal to the filial sentiments of Aurangzeb and to impress upon him the desirability of making up the quarrel. Aurangzeb replied that he was loyal to him. Shah Jahan, therefore, opened the gates of the fort and allowed Prince Muhammad, eldest son of Aurangzeb, to take charge of it and clear it of the old emperor's adherents. A meeting between Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb was arranged through Jahanara and Shah Jahan proposed that the empire should be divided between the four brothers. Aurangzeb started to enter the fort and meet his father, but he returned from the way as his officers intercepted a letter from Shah Jahan to Dara which convinced him that his father was at heart on the side of Dara and against him. The father and the son never met, and Aurangzeb after holding a pompous darbar started in pursuit of Dara, leaving Agra in charge of Muhammad.

While on the march towards Delhi, a coolness sprang up

between Aurangzeb and Murad, as the latter, feeling that he was being ignored by the former, who to all intents and purposes was acting as the sole ruler, began enlisting fresh troops to strengthen his position. Aurangzeb who was a past master in the art of intrigue and ruthlessness, craftily advanced some money to Murad in order to assist him in pursuing Dara and invited him to a feast. After some days' hesitation Murad accepted the invitation on the advice of one of his officers who had been seduced by Aurangzeb's gold. When the dinner at which he was served with wine was over, Aurangzeb requested Murad to take rest as he was tired after the hunt. A maid-servant was sent to shampoo Murad's legs in the tent where he was taking rest. This lulled him to sleep and the woman servant removed Murad's weapons from his side. Aurangzeb easily made him prisoner and sent him to be lodged in the fort at Delhi. Murad's troops were won over by bribe and persuaded to join Aurangzeb's army. This took place near Mathura.

During this interval Dara who had failed to recruit a sufficiently large army at Delhi to fight the victorious Aurangzeb, abandoned the imperial city and retreated to Lahore, thinking that he would strengthen his position there and oppose Aurangzeb's advance. He left some of his men to guard the ferries on the Sutlej and to furnish him news of the enemy's movements. He thought that Aurangzeb's army was fatigued and would not be in a position to proceed to Lahore in time to overtake him. He was mistaken. Aurangzeb, relieved of his anxiety about Murad, proceeded to Delhi and occupied it. From there he sent two forces, one to Lahore to pursue Dara and the other towards Allahabad to fight Sulaiman Shukoh, Dara's eldest son, and his own brother Shuja. At Delhi he assumed the title of emperor and carried out his coronation. Shah Jahan's reign thus came to an end. The ex-emperor passed the remaining days of his life as a prisoner in the fort at Agra. He was imprisoned in the gilded marble palace which he had built and from where he could have a view of the Taj Mahal which was then under construction.

Aurangzeb had now practically won the war of succession. Dara was in flight from Lahore where he could not rally opposition to his victorious brother. From Lahore he proceeded to Gujarat and was well-received at Ahmadabad by the governor of that province. With ten lakhs of rupees placed at his disposal by the friendly governor, he raised a fresh army and made other preparations for a final struggle with Aurangzeb. He was invited by Jaswant Singh of

Jodhpur and accordingly hastened to Ajmer, but was extremely disappointed to find that the Rajput chief had already been won over by Aurangzeb through the intercession of Jai Singh of Amber. The new emperor had sent an army to overtake the fleeing Dara, who was compelled to fight at the pass of Deorai near Ajmer and was once again defeated and had to take refuse by flight. He returned to Ahmadabad, but this time the governor refused to admit him into the town. Dara had no alternative but to turn to Afghanistan. He took shelter at Dadar with a Baluchi chief, Malik Jiwan, whom he had once saved from Shah Jahan's wrath. Dara's wife Nadira Begum, who had faithfully shared her husband's misfortune, accompanied him in his dangerous flight and was then ill, died at Dadar and the prince, himself, who had passionate attachment for her, was almost on the verge of death on account of his sad bereavement. Malik Jiwan treacherously betrayed the prince into the hands of Aurangzeb's men. He was taken captive along with his second son Siphir Shukoh and taken to Delhi and delivered into the hands of Aurangzeb on September 1, 1659. Aurangzeb was highly pleased and disgraced his elder brother by seating him in dirty attire on a filthy elephant and parading him in the streets of Delhi and then throwing him into a dungeon. Aurangzeb's court was divided on the punishment to be imposed on the exalted captive. Danishmand Khan wanted his life to be spared, whereas Shayista Khan and his own sister Raushanara urged that being a *Kafir*, he should be put to death. Aurangzeb instituted a special tribunal presided over by the high ulema to try Dara for apostacy. He was found guilty and beheaded. His eldest son Sulaiman Shukoh who had taken shelter in Garhwal was captured, brought to Delhi and sent as a prisoner to the fort at Gwalior. He died there as the result of slow poisoning. The victor's next brother Shuja, who had fled to Mungher after the battle of Bahadurpur, was defeated by Aurangzeb at the battle of Khajwah, in the Fatehpur district in Uttar Pradesh. Shuja once again fled to Bangal and then to Arakan. He was murdered by the Meghs. Murad, the youngest brother, who was lodged as a prisoner in the fort of Delhi, was put to death. Aurangzeb thus became the undisputed ruler of the country.

Last days of Shah Jahan, 1666

Shah Jahan lived a prisoner in the Shah Burj of the Agra Fort for eight years. Though he was allowed all comforts in the prison

and was attended by his favourite daughter Jahanara, he was very closely watched and not allowed any access to the people outside. Nor was he permitted to correspond with anybody or allowed to see anyone except in the presence of Aurangzeb's agents. Aurangzeb covered the royal jewellery in the possession of his father which the latter refused to part with. A bitter correspondence ensued between the father and the son and Aurangzeb blamed him for his partiality towards Dara and asked him to submit with resignation to the Divine will. The captive ex-emperor was deeply offended by the reproaches hurled on him by his undutiful son and in anger called Aurangzeb a robber and usurper. He even described him as a hyprocrite. A keen edge was added to Shah Jahan's suffering on account of the brutal murder of Dara and Murad and equally unfortunate fate of Shuja. He began passing his time in meditation and prayer. He fell ill in January 1666 and after having made his will he died on January 31 (N.S.), 1666 at the age of 74. It is said that he kept on gazing at the Taj Mahal till his last moment. Aurangzeb did not allow his father's funeral to be performed like the funeral of a king and Shah Jahan's bier was carried by eunuchs and menials. He was buried by the side of Mumtaz Mahal in the Taj Mahal at Agra.

Personality and character : Was his reign a Golden Age ?

Historians hold diametrically opposite views about the character and achievement of Shah Jahan. The late V. A. Smith was of the opinion that Shah Jahan failed both as a man and as a ruler and that the dazzling splendour of his court and the remarkable beauty of his buildings, specially of the Taj Mahal, misled the world into thinking that his reign was a golden period in the medieval history of India. Contemporary Indian historians and a few European travellers, on the other hand, looked upon Shah Jahan as a great and successful monarch, who ruled over the subjects as a father over his sons, and that the condition of the country under him was prosperous and people were happy. Neither of these views is absolutely correct.

Shah Jahan's personality and character had two facets. He was partly liberal and progressive and therefore in that sense a real successor of his father and grand-father. On the contrary, in certain other respects he resembled his son Aurangzeb and anticipated some of his measures. In that respect, he was without doubt a reactionary.

Smith is right when he says that Shah Jahan was not a dutiful son. He revolted against his father and for years remained in rebellion. But it must not be forgotten that he was forced into that course of action on account of the jealousy of his step-mother Nur Jahan who, as we have seen, was bent upon making the throne safe for her own son-in-law Shahryar. Moreover, the rebellion by the Mughul princes against their fathers had become more or less traditional. It is, therefore, unjust to single out Shah Jahan for blame on that account. He was an ambitious and energetic prince and was determined to succeed his father and prepared to resort to any kind of means to attain his end. Similarly, Smith's contention that he could not be praised as a husband for he disgraced himself after the death of his favourite queen Mumtaz Mahal, disregards the character of the generality of the Mughul princes who were polygamous and therefore not very faithful to conjugal love. Moreover, it can be rightly said in his favour that he remained true to Mumtaz Mahal for twenty long years. As a father he showed undue preference for his eldest son and failed to keep control over his family. Although as a private gentleman he was generally kind and merciful to the poor and the suppliant, he did not display those qualities of friendship and kindliness which characterised his ancestors, like Babur, Akbar and Jahangir who would weep and would not touch food for days on the loss of a friend or a relative. Whereas his ancestor Humayun was so reluctant to punish his ungrateful brothers, Shah Jahan ordered all his innocent male relatives to be put to death so that he might have no danger to face from any one of them. Barring these acts of selfishness, Shah Jahan possessed all the qualities of a cultured gentleman. He was learned and accomplished, polite and attentive in conversation, and was gifted with a sweet disposition and kingly looks. He was fond of literature and fine arts, such as, music and painting and above all architecture. Like his grand-father Akbar, Shah Jahan encouraged men of letters and arts and was surrounded by them at court and camp. He extended patronage not merely to Persian, but also to Sanskrit and Hindi. Abdul Hamid Lahauri, the court historian, tells us that Jagannath Pandit, the famous author of *Ras Gangadhar* and *Gangalahri*, was the poet laureate of Shah Jahan and the emperor used to listen to his composition and bestow upon him royal gifts and favours. Kavindra Acharya Sarasvati of Banaras who was eqully proficient in Hindi and Sanskrit and other Sanskrit scholars adorned his court, and under imperial patronage produced

several works of merit. Hindi poetry was not neglected. Besides Sundar Das, entitled Mohakavi Rai, the famous Hindi poet and author of *Sundar Sringar*, *Singhasan Battisi* and *Barahmasa* and the personal friend and confident of the emperor, Chintamani the greatest Hindi poet of the time, enjoyed the royal patronage. Shah Jahan had faith in astrology and many Hindu astrologists were employed for casting horoscopes of the members of the royal family and for fixing auspicious hours for marriages, military expeditions and other important undertakings. Shah Jahan continued the Mughul practice of celebrating at the court the Hindu festivals of Vasant and Dasehra, and weighing his person (tuladan) against gold, silver and other precious articles and distributing these among Brahmans, dervishes and other religious people. He also maintained the tradition of employing Hindus on high posts. In this respect, therefore, Shah Jahan followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather.

Shah Jahan was a better soldier and general than his father. Active in body and mind he personally planned and undertook military expeditions until his old age. He reorganised the army and made it a better fighting force. Inspite of this, he failed to recover Kandhar from the Shah of Persia and his three costly sieges of that frontier stronghold produced no result save disappointment and considerable loss of men, money and prestige. His Central Asian expedition met with no better fate. With all his martials, activity and ambition, the military condition of the Mughul empire under him was definitely weaker than under Akbar.

Shah Jahan's reign has been described as a golden period in the medieval history of India. This is true in one respect only and that is in the domain of art, particularly architecture. Shah Jahan's buildings represent the climax in the evolution of the Mughul architecture in this country. The Red Fort with its white marble palaces and Jami Masjid at Delhi, the Moti Masjid, Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-Khas and some other fine buildings in the Agra Fort and the famous Taj Mahal, besides many other buildings at several other places, are the best examples of Indo-Muslim architecture. The exquisite peacock throne with a canopy supported on twelve pillars adorned with precious jewels, built in seven years and the celebrated Koh-i-Nur added to the pomp and magnificence of his court. Music, vocal and instrumental, made great strides under Shah Jahan's patronage. Lavish attention was bestowed on painting, but, accord-

ing to critics, it deteriorated in taste and originality. There was great progress in literature, both Persian and Hindi, but there were no master writers of the calibre of Abul Fazl in Persion or Sur Das and Tulsi Das in Hindi. Sanskrit too flourished and was patronised. Thus, Shah Jahan's reign made an extraordinary contribution to the development of literature and art. But it must be noted that while it surpassed the previous reigns in architecture, it failed to compete with Jahangir's contribution to painting and Akbar's to literature, Persian, Hindi and Sanskrit, and to music and sculpture.

Shah Jahan was a capable administrator and statesman. His genius was orderly rather than inventive. He attempted to systematise the administration, particularly the military organisation known as the mansabdari system. He tried to reduce the high salaries of the mansabdars and compelled them to maintain in their service the exact number of troops prescribed for their several ranks. In this he succeeded to a great extent. The main regulation issued by Shah Jahan in the twentieth year of his reign was that a mansabdar who held a jagir in India, must maintain one-third of the troops indicated by his rank; one who held jagir outside India was required to maintain one-fourth the number of his rank. In the case of the latter, the number was a little later further reduced to one-fifth. Under Shah Jahan the highest mansab open to an officer was 9,000 zat and 9,000 sawar, which was held by his father-in-law Asaf Khan, but the princes held higher ranks. Dara's mansab, for example, was 40,000 zat and 20,000 sawar. He increased the state demand from one-third to one-half of the gross produce of the soil. He abandoned Akbar's *zabti* system and framed out the revenue of seven-tenth of the empire, reducing thereby the *Khalsa* land, that is, the land under the direct management of the Government. The burden of the cultivators increased considerably not only because they were now to pay one-half of their gross produce but also because they were required to pay for all the land in their possession and not as before for the land under actual cultivation. The condition of the tillers of the soil who formed 75% of the country's population became definitely worse than it was under Akbar or Jahangir.

Shah Jahan maintained his ancestral tradition of personally administering justice. He was stern in punishing the oppressors and dispensing even-handed justice. Inspite of his religious orthodoxy and policy of rank-renting the peasantry, the emperor retained his popularity among the masses. Hard-working and meticulously

careful in the discharge of his administrative duties, Shah Jahan used to get up early in the morning and appear at the Jharokha Darshan at sun-rise and to spend like his grand-father most of his time in attending to the business of the state. His daily routine has been described by the great historian, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, in his *Studies in Moghul India* which shows that despite his fondness for magnificence and pleasures of life, Shah Jahan was a hard-worked ruler. Yet during his reign were sown the seeds of reaction which became eventually the main cause of the downfall of his dynasty and the destruction of his empire. His religious bigotry and intolerance anticipated the reactionary reign of Aurangzeb. His persecution of heretics in Islam made the Shias feel that they were unwelcome at the imperial court. His fondness for money impelled him to increase the burden of the people and caused suffering among them. His love of presents accorded sanction to a pernicious custom of gilded bribery. The offering of *nazars* and presents became common not only at the royal court and camp, but also in the households of imperial nobles and officers and became responsible for a great deal of corruption in administration. His display of pomp and magnificence extorted money from the unwilling masses and classes, and his sensual tastes set a bad standard of public and private morality.

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AURANGZEB (1658—1707)

Early life

Muhi-ud-din Muhammad Aurangzeb was born on 3rd November, 1618 (N.S.) at Dohad near Ujjain, while his grandfather Jahangir was returning from the Dakhin to Agra. During his father's rebellion, Aurangzeb had to suffer great hardship and along with his elder brother Dara was made over to Nur Jahan as a hostage after Shah Jahan had submitted and was forgiven. On account of these difficulties his regular education began at the age of 10 and he was then placed under the charge of able teachers. He was a very intelligent and keen student and mastered the Quran and Hadis. At an early age he became a good scholar of Arabic and Persian, and learnt Turki and Hindi as well. While he took to the study of theology with great zest, he did not care for painting, music and other fine arts. His military education, which formed part of the curriculum, was not neglected and Aurangzeb soon became a fine soldier. At the end of 1634, he was appointed a mansabdar of 10,000 zat and 4,000 sawar. Then he was given charge of the Bundela expedition against Jujhar Singh of Orchha, which was his first experience of war and diplomacy. Next, he was appointed governor of the Dakhin which office he held from 1636 to 1644. Here he acquired reputation as a good soldier, administrator and diplomat. On 18th May, 1637, he was married to Dilras Banu Begum, daughter of Shah Nawaz, a member of the Persian ruling family. In may 1644, Aurangzeb was compelled to resign his governorship of the Dakhin on account of his differences with his elder brother Dara. In February 1645, he was forgiven and appointed governor of Gujarat, which charge he held till 1647 when he was directed to undertake an expedition to Balkh. Despite his qualities as a general, Aurangzeb failed to conquer Trans-Oxiana and was recalled to court and appointed governor of Multan which office he held from 1648 to 1652. During this period, he was commissioned to recover Kandhar, but his two sieges of that fortress in 1649 and 1652 proved unsuccessful. Shah Jahan was greatly annoyed and transferred him to the

Dakhin in 1652. The prince thus held the viceroyalty of southern India for the second time from 1652 to 1658.

Throughout his career as a governor, Aurangzeb displayed administrative capacity of a high order and devotion to duty, but, at the same time, he exerted greatly in organising a powerful party for winning his father's throne for himself. Being a bigoted Sunni, he imbibed a dislike for the Hindus, particularly the Rajputs, and openly insulted them by a policy of religious intolerance. In the Dakhin, he was on the point of conquering the kingdom of Bijapur and Golkunda when the rumours of Shah Jahan's illness and death reached there and obliged him to make preparations for participation in the war of succession. How he won the contest against his brothers and finished them off one by one has been described in the previous chapter.

Coronation

After the capture of Agra, the imprisonment of his father in that fort and disposing of the claims of Murad Bakhsh for the sovereignty, Aurangzeb went through hurried ceremony of accession at Delhi on 31st July, 1658, assuming the title of Abul Muzaffar Muhiud-din Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahadur Alamgir Padshah Ghazi. But as he had to pursue Dara and settle his scores with Shuja, he postponed the customary celebration and rejoicing. After his victories of Khajuha and Ajmer, the new emperor entered Delhi in grand procession on 15th May, 1659. There in Shah Jahan's grand palace his coronation ceremoney was held with great pomp and splendour. The emperor took his seat on the peacock throne at 3 hours 15 minutes from sunrise on 15th May, 1659, the hour fixed by astrologers. Prolonged rejoicings were observed and the emperor grudged no expenditure to make the occasion go down to history as one of the grandest coronations ever celebrated by a Mughul monarch. Grand feasts and large-scale illuminations were held and many nobles and officers were promoted and new appointments made.

Early measures : Religious intolerance

Aurangzeb took steps to repair the ravage done by the prolonged war of succession which had also thrown the administration out of gear and caused misery throughout northern India. First of all, the new emperor established order and gave peace by bringing the governors and other important officers under proper control. Next, he gave much needed relief to the people by abolishing many

illegal taxes, the most important of which were inland transport duty (*rahdari*) and octroi (*pandari*) which were levied on articles of food and drink that were brought for sale in the cities. In the crown lands alone these taxes involved a loss of royal revenue to the extent of 25 lakhs of rupees. The third category of taxes abolished was the *abwabs* or miscellaneous taxes levied over and above the regular land revenue and customs duty. Although abolished again and again by the previous rulers, these had reappeared time after time. The important *abwabs* were duties on the local sale of all articles of consumption, licence tax on various kinds of trade, gifts and subscriptions exacted by officers and fees and commissions realised for the state. Besides, there were certain special taxes on the Hindus, such as pilgrim's tax, tax on throwing the bones of dead Hindus into the Ganga and a tax on the birth of a male child. These were abolished by Aurangzeb's orders. Although the abolitions must have been respected in important cities, most of these taxes must have continued to be realised (as Khwafi Khan says) from the people in the distant provinces.

As the champion of Sunni orthodoxy, Aurangzeb issued a number of ordinances to make the Muslims conform to the orthodox rules of conduct as taught by the Quran. He gave up the practice of inscribing the *Kalima* on the coins. Next, he discontinued the observance of Persian New Year's Day, as it was un-Islamic, and forbade the cultivation of *bhang* throughout the empire. He appointed censors of public morals (*muhtasibs*) in all important cities to enforce the Quranic law and to put down drinking, gambling and prostitution. The *muhtasibs* were also required to see that Muslims prayed five times every day and kept the fast of Ramzan. One of their duties was to punish those who were found guilty of blasphemy and also heretics in Islam. The emperor punished the Sufis for holding liberal religious views akin to elastic pantheism. Sarmad who was an associate of Dara was put to death on the charge of heresy. Many Shias were similarly beheaded for abusing the first three Khalifas and so also many converts to Islam who were suspected of having reverted to their old faith. The most important section of the Muslim population that suffered bloody persecution at the hands of the new emperor was the Ismailia or Bohra community of Gujarat.

Conquests

Aurangzeb's first conquest was that of Assam which was ruled

over by a Mongoloid dynasty. During the war of succession the rulers of Cooch-Behar and Assam had seized the Mughul district of Kamrup which was situated between their kingdoms. Aurangzeb appointed Mir Jumla as governor of Bangal and directed him to recover the Mughul territory. After a short campaign, Mir Jumla captured the capital of Cooch-Behar and annexed that to the kingdom. Then he proceeded to invade Assam which was under the Ahoms who were a branch of Shan race and had established their rule over eastern and central Assam in the 13th century. The Ahoms, after a slight fighting, retreated to the Brahmaputra and Mir Jumla defeated them in a naval battle on March 13, 1662, and occupied the Ahom capital Garhgaon, where he acquired a valuable booty. He established a garrison in the Ahom capital. But the Mughul occupation of Assam proved to be precarious, for during the rainy season the country was flooded, communications were cut off and the Mughul outposts were isolated. Thousands of Mughul soldiers perished from starvation as no provision could reach them, and the Ahoms captured some of the Mughul frontier outposts and cut off communications between the Mughul army and navy. They attacked the Mughuls but were defeated. Nevertheless, the Mughul position became almost untenable and Mir Jumla, worn out by exertion and unhealthy climate of Assam, died on 10th April, 1663. Shayista Khan was now appointed governor of Assam. In 1663 he captured Chatgaon and drove away the Portuguese from the delta of the Brahmaputra. He even defeated the raja of Arakan. The Mughuls held Assam for four years longer, but the Ahom king Chakradhwaj recovered all his lost territories. He even captured Gauhati. The Mughul frontier was thus pushed back to the river Monas. In 1679 the Mughuls recovered Gauhati, but it was again lost two years later. Thus Kamrup ceased to be a part of the Mughul empire. But after much fighting the raja of Cooch-Behar finally accepted the suzerainty of the Mughuls.

The next important work that engaged the attention of the governor of Bangal was of putting down the pirates (the Portuguese), who constantly plundered Bangal, carried off the people and sold them as slaves at the Indian ports. Shayista Khan built a fleet of 300 vessels called flotilla, conquered the island of Sandwip and captured Chatgaon which was made the headquarters of a Mughul commandant. He released thousands of Bangali peasants who were slaves in the hands of the Portuguese.

Serveral minor conquests were made during the first half of Aurangzeb's reign. In 1661 Daud Khan, governor of Patna, conquered and annexed Palamau in southern Bihar. The Mughul suzerainty was established over the ruler of little Tibat or Ladakh where for the first time a mosque was built.

A few rebellions occurred during the first half of the reign but they were easily suppressed. Champat Rai of Bundelkhand, driven by injustice done to him and his predecessors in Orchha, unfurled the flag of revolt, but he was eventually compelled to submit in 1661. In 1663 Rai Singh of Nawanagar in Kathiawar who revolted was obliged to submit. Rao Karan Singh of Bikaner openly defied Aurangzeb's authority, but later apologised and was forgiven. There was a fierce rising of the Jats in Mathura and Agra districts and of the Sikhs in the Panjab which continued for a long time. Barring these North India remained undisturbed and enjoyed internal peace during the first twenty-five years of Aurangzeb's reign.

War with the frontier tribes

Though a champion of Muslim orthodoxy, Aurangzeb had to wage wars with equally fanatical Muslim tribes of the north-western frontier region. The Afghan tribes who live in that territory have always followed highway robbery as their profession. Their country being arid and unproductive, they find it profitable to plunder the inhabitants of the plains and the traders whose way lies from Afghanistan into India and through the passes in the frontier. The Mughul emperors found it difficult to conquer and tame the tribesmen by force and consequently they bribed them in order to maintain peace and to keep the routes in the frontier open to peaceful traffic. For this purpose Aurangzeb paid the border chiefs 6 lakhs of rupees annually, but the policy of bribing the frontier chiefs did not always succeed, for fresh leaders arose amongst the tribesmen and they often resorted to plundering the Mughul territory. In 1667 Bhagu, a leader of the Yusufzai clan of the Swat and Bajaur districts north of Peshawar, set up a pretender, entitled Muhammad Shah, as the king of the clan, crossed the Indus near Attock and invaded the Mughul distrit of Hazara. Other bands of Yusufzais plundered the Attock and Peshawar districts and attempted to hold the ferry on the Indus at Harun to prevent the Mughul army from crossing into the tribal area. They were defeated by Kamil Khan, the commandant of Attock in April 1667. Another commander,

Shamsher Khan, crossed into the Yusufzai territory and defeated the tribesmen. In September the emperor despatched Muhammad Amin Khan to punish the Yusufzais. The hard blows that he inflicted compelled the rebels to keep quiet for some years.

In 1672, however, there was another revolt in the frontier region. The Afridi chief Akmal Khan crowned himself king, declared a holy war against the Mughuls and summoned all the Pathans to join him. The rebels attacked Muhammad Amin Khan, governor of Afghanistan, at Ali Masjid. The Mughul army was defeated, but Muhammad Amin escaped leaving all his camp and property including his women who were carried into slavery by the victorious Pathans. This success fired the ambition of the tribesmen and the rising spread throughout the entire frontier region. The rebels were joined by the gifted Khushal Khan of the Khattak clan, who inspired the rebels by his soul-stirring poems. Aurangzeb appointed Mahabat Khan as governor of Afghanistan with instructions to put down the rebellious Pathans, but the new governor arrived at a secret understanding with the rebels and consequently the Khybar route remained closed. The emperor was displeased and sent Shujaat Khan to punish the rebels, but he was defeated and killed on March 3, 1674.

The situation now became so menacing that Aurangzeb was obliged to proceed to Hasan Abdul near Peshawar. He stayed there for a year and a half to direct the operations. Mahabat Khan was removed from the governorship and a fresh army was sent to fight the Pathans. The emperor also had recourse to diplomacy. He offered government posts to tribal chiefs and bribed them with money. The result was that while some of the clans accepted the imperial offers and submitted peacefully, the others, like Ghorai, Ghilzai, Shirani and Yusufzai who rejected the imperial offers, were defeated and crushed. The imperial commander, Uighur Khan, played prominent part in crushing the rebellious Afghans and established such a reputation for bravery that the Afghan mothers hushed "their babies to sleep with Uighur Khan's dreaded name." By December 1675 the frontier was almost quiet and the emperor, therefore, left Hasan Abdul for Delhi. He appointed Amir Khan governor of Kabul. By tact and diplomacy and friendly relations with the Afghans the new governor succeeded in quietening them and keeping the routes open to traffic. His success was in no small measure due to the ability and advice of his wife Sahibji who was a

daughter of Ali Mardan Khan. He remained governor of Kabul till his death in 1698.

Amir Khan's policy of paying subsidies to the tribal chiefs and sowing dissensions among them proved successful and led to the break-up of the Afghan confederacy under Akmal Khan, on whose death the Afridis submitted and made peace with the emperor. Khushal Khan Khattak, however, continued the war for some years more. He was, however, betrayed by his own son and was captured and imprisoned. The frontier war then came to an end. But it proved a very costly war. Besides draining the imperial resources in men and money, it diverted the Mughul attention from the Marathas whose king Shivaji turned the opportunity to his advantage and conquered Karnatak without being checked by the Mughuls.

Aurangzeb's ideal of kingship

Aurangzeb believed in the Islamic theory of kingship and sovereignty which enjoins the ruler to enforce the Quranic law in the administration of his state and to convert his country from a heathen land into the land of Islam. He was convinced that his immediate ancestors on the throne of Delhi had committed a grave error in disregarding the Quranic law and in attempting to conduct the administration on secular lines. Akbar had dis-established Islam as the religion of the state and had abandoned the Islamic theory of kingship and substituted it by the Hindu ideal of sovereignty. It was, therefore, Aurangzeb's policy to do away with the innovations introduced by his great ancestor. Accordingly from the beginning of his reign he took steps to champion the cause of Sunni orthodoxy. He restored Islam to its former position as the state religion and placed the entire resources of the empire at the disposal of the missionary propaganda of his faith. He made it the chief aim of his life to put down *kufr* (polytheism) and to carry on *jihad* (holy war) for transforming India, which in his eyes was an infidel country (*Dar-ul-harb*), into the realm of Islam (*Dar-ul-Islam*) by attempting to convert her people into Muslims and conducting her administration in strict accordance with the Quranic law. As long as the entire country could not be conquered and the entire population therein could not be made to embrace Islam, he would impose political, economic and social disabilities on the non-Muslims, so as to remind them every day of their inferiority and to force them to

abandon their ancestral religion and become converts to the Muslim faith.

First of all, the new emperor restored Islam to its original position as the religion of the court and the country. Next he undertook to re-establish the Muslim law of conduct by abolishing non-Muslim innovations. He removed the Kalima from the coins, abolished the celebration of the Persian New Year's Day, forbade the cultivation of *bhang* and appointed *muhtasibs* (religious censors) in all the important cities to enforce the Quranic law. He forbade music at his court, gave up the ceremony of weighing the emperor's person (tuladan) against gold; silver and other precious articles on his birthday, and also appearing at sun-rise at Jharokha Darshan. Hindu astrologers were dismissed from the court, though Muslim astrologers were retained and continued to be consulted by the emperor. He forbade the old temples to be repaired and a little later issued an order to the governors of the provinces "to demolish the schools and temples of the infidels and put down their teaching and religious practices strongly." The *Muhtasibs* had to go round and destroy Hindu temples and shrines within their jurisdictions. "So large was the number of official temple-breakers that a daroga (superintendent) had to be placed over them to guide and unite their activities. Even the universally respected old temples of Vishwanath at Banaras, Keshav Dev at Mathura and Somnath at Patan were razed to the ground. Even those in the states of friendly Hindu rajas, such as Jaipur, were not spared, and the destruction of temples and images were "often accompanied by wanton desecration, such as slaughtering of the cows in the sanctuary and causing the idols to be trodden down in public quarters."

On April 12, 1679 the emperor promulgated an order reimposing *jizya* on Hindus "with the object of spreading Islam and overthrowing infidel practices." This was a commutation tax, charged from non-Muslims in the feudatory states as well as in the empire, whether in royal service or engaged in private vocations or agriculture, for their not embracing Islam, and had to be paid by them in person with marks of humility. For the purpose of assessment and collection of this tax the entire non-Muslim population was divided into three grades : the first grade paid 41 dirhams, the second 24 and the third 12 a year, the value of a dirham being a little over a quarter of a rupee. Women, children, beggars, slaves and paupers were exempted from the tax. Monks, if they were not members of

wealthy monasteries, were also exempted. The effect of this tax on the Hindus was highly injurious. Manucci observes that many Hindus who could not pay *jizya* became Muhammadans in order to "obtain relief from the insults of the collectors." Aurangzeb was gratified. He ignored Hindu protests. He also re-imposed the pilgrim's tax on the Hindus, each of whom had to pay rupees six and annas four for bathing in the Ganga at Prayag, and a similar sum at other holy places. The emperor abolished the customs duties in the case of Muslim merchants, but continued it at the old rate of 5% in case of Hindus. This was done in order to put pressure on the Hindus. He announced that those Hindus who embraced Islam would be granted stipends and free gifts. He even offered posts to converts in the state service, and to liberate Hindu prisoners, if they turned Muslims. Some Muhammadan families in the Panjab have in their possession letters patent appointing their Hindu ancestors to the posts of Qanungos as a reward of apostasy from Hinduism. When two or more persons quarrelled about a property, the emperor put one in possession who became Muslim. In 1671 Aurangzeb dismissed Hindu revenue collectors from all the provinces, but as the adequate number of qualified Muslims was not available the former were allowed to remain in service in some parts of the empire. In 1688 he prohibited Hindu religious fairs and festivals and at the same year all Hindus except Rajputs were forbidden to ride in palanquins, on elephants and good horses. They were forbidden to carry arms. Thus Aurangzeb put every kind of pressure on the Hindus in order to induce their conversion to Islam. Sometimes he even used force to gain converts. (S. R. Sharma, *Religious Policy of the Mughuls*, p. 162). He threw political wisdom to the wind and made the propagation of Islam the chief aim of his administration. Verily, the state under him became a large missionary institution.

Jat Rebellion, 1668-1689

Aurangzeb's deliberate policy of converting India into a Muslim country was opposed in Rajasthan, Malwa, Bundelkhand and Khandesh, where many converted mosques were demolished by the people and the Muslim call to prayer was stopped. In some places the *jizya* collectors were beaten, their beards were plucked out and then they were driven away. But the first organised Hindu reaction against Aurangzeb's policy of persecution occurred in the district of Mathura. There the sturdy Jat peasantry under its leader

Gokul in 1669 killed Abdul Nabi, the local district officer who was faithfully carrying out his master's policy of temple-destruction and image-breaking. This officer had built a mosque in the heart of the holy city of Mathura on the ruins of Hindu temples, had removed the carved stone railing presented to Keshava Rai temple by Dara and had been abducting Hindu girls. The Jats killed him and plundered the pargana of Sadabad. After a prolonged warfare with several contingents of troops sent by the emperor, the Jats were defeated in a bloody battle near Tilpat. Gokul was captured with his family and brought to Agra where on the platform of the police office his limbs were hacked to pieces and his family was forcibly converted to Islam. Nevertheless, the Jats continued to be rebellious and their leadership was assumed in 1686 by Raja Ram of Sinsani and Ramchera of Soghar, who trained their clansmen in open warfare, built strong mud-forts in inaccessible jungles and carried on depredations to the gates of Agra. Raja Ram acquired fame by defeating and killing in 1687 the famous Mughul commander Uighur Khan and plundering another noble Mir Ibrahim entitled Mahabat Khan. He even looted Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, caused great damage to the building and, according to Manucci, dug out and burnt the great emperor's bones. Aurangzeb was alarmed and in 1688 sent his grandson Bidar Bakht, assisted by Bishan Singh, ruler of Amber, then in charge of Mathura district, to put down the Jats. Raja Ram was defeated and slain in July 1688 and Sinsani was captured by the Mughuls after a tough battle in which the Mughuls lost 900 men and the Jats 1500. Raja Ram's place was taken by his nephew Churaman who continued the resistance till Aurangzeb's death. He collected a powerful army and became the founder of the ruling house of Bharatpur. The rise of the Jats became ultimately an important cause of the downfall of the Mughul empire.

Satnami Rebellion

The next formidable rebellion was that of the Satnamis in the districts of Narnol and Mewat. The Satnamis were a peaceful religious brotherhood who believed in the unity of God and were employed in agriculture. They shaved their head and face including eye-brows and were, therefore, called Mundiyas. The rebellion was due to a private quarrel between a Satnami peasant and a Mughul foot soldier of the local revenue collector. The soldier's unbecoming conduct aroused the wrath of the Satnamis and the quarrel developed

into a holy war against the Mughuls. The movement spread quickly and received impetus on account of the rumours that an old prophetess had made the Satnamis proof against bullets. The confidence of the Satnamis grew as the result of a number of victories which they gained over the imperial troops under local officers. They plundered and occupied the town and district of Narnol. Aurangzeb was compelled to send a large army under Radandaz Khan, equipped with artillery. He wrote out magic charm on papers and tied them to the flags of the army so as to counteract the enemy's spells. The Satnamis fought stubbornly but were ultimately defeated. Two thousands of them lay dead on the field and the rest were terrorised into submission.

Aurangzeb and the Sikhs

Aurangzeb's policy of religious persecution roused the Sikhs who broke out into a rebellion and eventually became an important cause of the downfall of the Mughul empire. The Sikh sect, founded by Guru Nanak at the beginning of the 16th century, was purely a religious brotherhood and believed in the unity of God and spiritual liberation by means of prayer, self-restraint and good actions. Nanak rejected image-worship and denounced caste and the supremacy of the Brahmans and Mullahs. His first three successors followed in his footsteps. The fourth, Guru Ram Das, was the first to aspire to a temporal as well as spiritual domination. His successor Guru Arjun, who succeeded to the gaddi in 1581, edited the Guru Granth Sahib, built the Golden Temple at Amritsar, organised the Sikhs into a compact community and established for himself a regular source of income by appointing officers, called masands, to collect the tithes and offerings from the Sikhs wherever they might be. He blessed the rebellious Khusrav and was, therefore, imprisoned and tortured to death by Jahangir in 1606. His son Hargovind was trained himself as a warrior, came into clash with Shah Jahan by encroaching on the royal game preserves and defeating the Mughul troops sent against him. Shah Jahan ordered Hargovind's house and property to be seized. The Guru thereafter took refuge at Kiratpur and died in 1645. He was succeeded by Har Rai after whose death Har Kishan became guru. Then came Tegh Bahadur who took up his residence at Anandpur. Meanwhile, Aurangzeb who had become emperor began his policy of religious persecution, ordered the Sikh temples to be destroyed and masands to be expelled from

the cities. Guru Tegh Bahadur offered open resistance and was, therefore, arrested and taken to Delhi where he was asked to embrace Islam and on his refusal was tortured for five days and then put to death (December 1675).

Aurangzeb's fanaticism and his deliberate policy of compelling the people to turn Muslim brought about an irreconcilable breach between the Sikhs and Islam and compelled Tegh Bahadur's son Govind Singh to determine to avenge his father's death. He transformed the Sikhs into a military community and called it *Khalsa*. The members of the Khalsa were to put on a distinctive dress and to keep on their person five things beginning with K—Kesh (hair), Kirpan (sword), Kachha (underwear), Kanghi (comb) and Kara (iron bangle). They were further to give up all caste distinctions and all restrictions about food and drink. A new initiation into the Khalsa was prescribed and its members were made to believe that they were a chosen people. Guru Govind's Sikhism thus became a veritable counterblast to Aurangzeb's Islam, and under his command the Khalsa pursued the policy of fighting fanaticism with fanaticism.

In northern Panjab Guru Govind Singh had to fight against Muslim officers and Hindu rajas who were directed by Aurangzeb to co-operate with imperial troops in putting down the rebellious Sikhs. The guru defeated them more than once and his followers went on increasing. The guru's home at Anandpur was five times besieged and eventually he had to abandon this place and to take refuge in the plains. He was pursued by the Mughuls and hunted from place to place and had to escape to the Dakhin through Bikaner. Two of his sons were slain during the course of fighting and the remaining two were put to death by the faujdar of Sarhind (1705). The guru returned to northern India on the receipt of the news of Aurangzeb's death. He joined Bahadur Shah in the letter's war with his brothers and proceeded with him to the Dakhin. While in camp at Nadir on the Godavari, he was stabbed to death by an Afghan follower in 1708.

Govind Singh was the tenth and the last guru of the Sikhs. A little before his death he had abolished the guruship and instructed his followers to turn the Sikhs into a military democracy. "I shall always be present wherever five Sikhs are assembled," he said. The Sikhs by the time of Guru Govind Singh's death were a powerful rebellious community, vowed to end the Mughul tyranny.

Policy towards the Rajputs

Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, who was the foremost Hindu chief in the empire and had fought against Aurangzeb at Dharmat and plundered his camp at Khajuha, died on December 20, 1678, at Jamrud in Afghanistan where he had been posted to guard that Mughul outpost. Aurangzeb who hated the Rajputs and could not freely indulge in his policy of extirpating Hinduism as long as powerful Hindu rulers like Jai Singh Kachhawaha and Jaswant Singh were alive, welcomed the event and ordered annexation of the Raja's kingdom of Marwar, himself proceeding to Ajmer to deal with any possible Rathor national resistance. The step was necessary, for the success of the emperor's policy of converting the country into an Islamic state depended upon the obliteration of the foremost Hindu state which was likely to offer resistance and defeat his object. After the occupation of Marwar, Aurangzeb returned to Delhi on 12th April, 1679 and that very day reimposed the *jizya* on the Hindus which had been exempted by Akbar about a little over one hundred years before. Meanwhile, Jaswant Singh's family was on its way from Jamrud to Delhi and at Lahore his two queens gave birth to two posthumous sons in February 1679, one of whom died after birth and the other lived to become the future Maharaja Ajit Singh. Ajit Singh with his mother arrived at Delhi in June and Aurangzeb ordered him to be transferred to the royal harem and offered him the throne of Jodhpur on the condition of his embracing Islam as he subsequently did to the Maratha king Shahu in 1703. This was too much to the Rathors who, under their leader Durga Das, rescued their baby king Ajit Singh by a stratagem, substituting a maid-servant and her child in place of the Rani and the prince. While a band of Rathor warriors engaged the Mughul troops who had been sent to seize the Rani and Ajit Singh and had besieged Jaswant Singh's mansion at Delhi, Durga Das at the head of another band of Rathors had covered nine miles, taking with them the Rani disguised in male attire and other members of the Rathor ruling family. Aurangzeb sent an army to fight Durga Das and bring back the Rani and her son to Delhi. The Rathors fought and defeated the Mughuls three times and drove them back. Ajit Singh was thus able to reach Marwar in safety. Baffled in his design Aurangzeb substituted a milkman's infant in place of Ajit, converted him to Islam, gave him the name of Muhammad Raj and proclaimed that

Durga Das's protege was a bogus prince. He removed Indra Singh of Nagaur, who had been given Marwar for being a loyal partisan of the Mughuls, and formally annexed the state of Jodhpur which was now placed under a Mughul commandant. The emperor again proceeded to Ajmer and despatched his son Akbar with a big army to reconquer Marwar where the population had risen against the Mughul oppressors. After a prolonged warfare the imperialists succeeded in occupying the country. They plundered all the towns and destroyed the temples, but the Rathors who had taken shelter in the hills and deserts, continued harassing them.

Aurangzeb next turned against Mewar and asked Maharana Raj Singh to pay the *jizya* for his entire state. Raj Singh correctly realising that Aurangzeb's real intention was to blot out the Rajput states from existence, took up the cause of Ajit Singh and prepared to offer a tough resistance to the Mughuls. But Aurangzeb forestalled the Maharana's designs and sent 7,000 chosen troops under Hasan Ali Khan to invade Mewar. The Maharana thereupon retired to the hills, abandoning his capital at Udaipur. Hasan Ali Khan occupied Chittor and Udaipur and demolished the temples there. He pursued Raj Singh and defeated him on 1st February, 1680. The emperor now returned to Ajmer leaving prince Akbar in charge of Chittor. Raj Singh then raided the Mughul outposts and cut off their supplies. Some of the Rajputs surprised Akbar's camp near Chittor one night and put many Mughuls to death. After this initial success, Raj Singh proceeded to Bednor and defeated Akbar inflicting upon him severe losses. Aurangzeb transferred Akbar to Jodhpur, appointed prince Azam to take charge of Chittor, and planned another invasion of Mewar. Three armies from three different directions were to enter the Mewer hills simultaneously ; the first under Azam from the eastern side was to pass through Deobari Pass and attack Udaipur, the second under Muazzam from the north was to proceed by way of Raj Samudra lake, and the third under Akbar from the west to invade the country through Deosuri Pass. Of these the first two generals failed to force their entry into the heart of Mewar. Akbar reached Nadol and after two month's stay there advanced to Deosuri. But he could make no further progress and failed to drive Raj Singh who was encamped in Kumbhalgarh, eight miles south of Akbar's encampment. The prince became despaired of success and realising the futility of his father's reactionary policy, entered into negotiations with the Rajputs and on January

11, 1681 rebelled against his father and with the assistance of the Rathors and Sisodias proclaimed himself emperor of India.

Prince Akbar's momentous decision was due to the Rajput overtures made a few weeks before, inviting him to seize the throne and declare himself emperor with their assistance. It was agreed that the Sisodias and the Rathors would place their forces at the disposal of the prince who would celebrate his accession and proceed against his father. Realising that his father's policy of religious fanaticism and rooting out the Rajputs was suicidal to the country as well as to the Mughul ruling dynasty, Akbar prepared to abide by the advice of Durga Das and Maharana Raj Singh. But Raj Singh's death on November 1, 1680 and the accession of his son Jai Singh delayed the project of an attack on Aurangzeb. As soon as the new Mewar ruler was ready to place his contingent at the prince's disposal, Akbar had a *fatwa* issued under the signatures of four Muslim ulemas, declaring that Aurangzeb had violated the Quranic law and, therefore, forfeited the throne. The prince then crowned himself emperor on January 11, 1681. On 12th January, he, accompanied by the Sisodia and Rathor forces, began his fateful march against his father who was encamped at Ajmer. The emperor, who had tender affection for Akbar, was stunned by the blow, but soon recovered from the shock and despite a slender army at his command issued out of Ajmer and took up his position at Doraha, ten miles south of that town. He resorted to cunning diplomacy for winning over Akbar's adherents, and had a letter written to the prince's most staunch follower Tahavvur Khan by the latter's father-in-law, promising him pardon, if he came over the imperial service but threatening to ruin his family, then in the imperial camp, in the event of his refusal to comply. Obsessed by the thought of welfare of his wives and sons, Tahavvur stole one night into Aurangzeb's camp without informing Akbar or any of the Rajput chiefs, and was killed by Aurangzeb's attendants. Next the emperor wrote a letter to Akbar commending him for successfully implementing the emperor's stratagem of bringing the principal Rajputs within his reach so as to have them crushed between the imperial troops and those of Akbar. This letter was purposely dropped near the Rajput camp and when it was read by Durga Das, he was surprised and went straight to Akbar for an explanation. The prince's eunuchs informed Durga Das that he was asleep. Then Durga Das went to Tahavvur and found that he had secretly gone over to Aurangzeb's

side during the previous night. The Rajputs now could not help believing that Akbar had hatched a plot in conjunction with his father to bring about their destruction, and consequently they fell on Akbar's camp, looted his property and abandoned him and marched away to Mewar. Most of Akbar's troops deserted the bewildered prince and went off to join Aurangzeb. When Akbar awoke he found with him only 350 horses and feeling that his safety lay in joining the Rajputs, he retreated towards Mewar with some of his wives and children and part of his treasure. Next day Aurangzeb occupied Akbar's camp and punished his followers, specially the four mullahs who had issued a *fatwa* against him.

Durga Das having soon discovered that the break-up of the confederacy was due to the fraud played by Aurangzeb and not treachery on the part of Akbar, took the prince under his protection and after a perilous journey through Rajputana and Khandesh conducted him to the court of Shambhuji, son of Shivaji, the only Indian ruler bold enough to afford shelter to the fugitive prince.

Aurangzeb now decided to patch up a peace with the Maharana of Udaipur in order to proceed to the Dakhin to put down Akbar's pretensions to the sovereignty of India, before the latter could secure assistance of the Maratha king and endanger the peace of the empire. Maharana Jai Singh whose dominion was threatened by the imperial force was equally anxious to settle matters with emperor. Accordingly a treaty was concluded between the two on 24th June, 1681. The Maharana ceded the parganas of Madal Pur and Bidnor in lieu of the *jizya* imposed on him. The emperor appointed the Maharana to the mansab of 5,000 and confirmed him in his territory with the title of 'Rana'. Marwar, however, was not prepared to make peace, and it remained at war with the Mughul emperor for twenty-seven years more. The Rajput war alienated the sympathy of the loyal Rathor and Sisodia clans from the Mughul throne. Their example was followed by the Hara and Gaur clans, which undermined the Mughul authority in northern India. However, Aurangzeb proceeded towards the Dakhin at the head of a large army and arrived at Burhanpur in November and at Aurangabad on April 1, 1682.

During Aurangzeb's absence in the Dakhin, Marwar continued to be in rebellion. The Rathor patriots, who occupied the hills and deserts, often descended upon the plains, fell on the Mughul outposts and cut off their convoys and communications. Thus they

kept on harassing the Mughul governor of Jodhpur and gave him no time to consolidate his hold over the Rathor kingdom. The history of the Rathor war of liberation falls into three clear stages : (1) From 1681 to 1687 it was a people's war as Ajit Singh was a mere child and the famous Rathor hero Durga Das was absent in the Dakhin. There was no central authority among the Rathors who fought individually and their guerilla bands simultaneously attacked the Mughuls at several places and gave them no rest or time to establish a regular administration. (2) From 1687 to 1701 the Rathor command was in the hands of Durga Das who had returned from the Dakhin and with the assistance of Durjan Sal Hara of Bundi cleared the plains of Marwar and invaded the Mughul territory as far as Mewat and the neighbourhood of Delhi. In 1690 he even defeated the governor of Ajmer, but failed to recover Marwar, as its new Mughul governor Shujaat Khan was a capable man who pursued the clever policy of having secret understanding with the local Rathor leaders and paying them *chauth* or one-fourth of the imperial revenue from customs duties. Durga Das, however, made peace with the emperor to whom he was persuaded to deliver prince Akbar's daughter Ṣafiyat-un-Nisa (1694) and son Buland Akhtar (1698) as the result of which Aurangzeb appointed Durga Das a mansabdar of 3,000 and the commandant of Patan in Gujarat. Ajit Singh was given in jagir the parganas of Jalor, Sanchod and Siwana and a rank in the Mughul service, but was not restored to his kingdom. (3) The third stage lasted from 1701 to 1707 at the end of which Ajit Singh succeeded in recovering Marwar and making himself independent of Delhi. In 1701 Azam Shah was appointed Mughul governor of Jodhpur and he provoked the Rathors. The emperor tried to get Durga Das arrested or killed. So the Rathor warrior fled to Marwar and was joined by Ajit Singh and they again set up the standard of rebellion. Aurangzeb was once again compelled to make peace with Ajit Singh, and give him Merta in jagir. Durga Das also submitted soon after and was restored to his rank and post in Gujarat. But in 1706 the Marathas invaded Gujarat and Ajit Singh and Durga Das again rebelled against the Mughuls. Although Durga Das drived into Koli country, Ajit Singh gained prominence by defeating Muhkam Singh of Nagaur, a loyal vassal of the emperor. Meanwhile, news of Aurangzeb's death reached Rajputana. Ajit Singh attacked the Mughul governor and expelled him from Marwar. He also recovered Sojat, Pali and Merta from

the hands of the Mughuls and made himself Maharaja of Marwar in 1707.

Other parts of northern India after 1681

Aurangzeb's long absence from northern India and draining away its revenues and man-power to fight the interminable Dakhin wars, and his placing the north Indian provinces in the charge of second-rate officers with small contingents of troops and limited resources, caused disorder and misrule in the country. Besides the Rathor war of independence in Marwar and veiled defiance to the imperial authority in Mewar and some other parts of Rajasthan, serious Hindu risings occurred in Malwa, Bihar and Bundelkhand. The English traders revolted in Bangal in 1686, and the wild region of Gondwana was distracted throughout the last quarter of the 17th century. Harassed by Aurangzeb's policy of religious persecution and imperialistic greed the ruling families of Deogarh and Chanda into which Gondwana was divided, turned Muslim, but even then failed to save their lands. Gujarat and Malwa were harassed by Maratha incursion since the last years of the 17th century. The first Maratha raid on Malwa took place in November 1699 under Krishna Savant who looted the neighbourhood of Dhamoni. Thereafter the Marathas repeated their incursions in Berar and in co-operation with local zamindars ravaged Khandesh and Malwa. In March 1706 Dhanaji Jadav penetrated into Gujarat, defeated two divisions of the Mughul army and captured two generals, Safdar Khan Babi and Nazr Ali Khan. Next, he defeated and imprisoned Abdul Hamid Khan, deputy-governor of the province and his chief officers, and plundered their entire camp. Aurangzeb had alienated the principal business communities of Gujarat, namely, the Ismailia and Daudi Bohras who were Shias by arresting their religious teachers and imposing upon them Sunni teachings and practices. This unwise policy kept the province in a state of ferment.

The most redoubtable and successful enemy of Aurangzeb in northern India was Chhatra Sal, son of Champat Rai Bundela of Orchha in Bundelkhand. After his father Champat Rai had been compelled by sheer force to submit to Aurangzeb in 1661, Chhatra Sal had entered the Mughul service as a petty captain and fought in Dakhin under Raja Jai Singh. Inspired by Shivaji's opposition to the Mughuls, he offered his sword to the Maratha hero to annihilate the Mughul imperialism. But as Shivaji advised him to foment

risings in his own country in order to distract the enemy's attention, Chhatra Sal returned to Bundelkhand and was welcomed by the Hindu population which had grown sick of Aurangzeb's policy of religious intolerance. He was joined by a large number of people and elected king of Bundelkhand. He defeated Mughul troops and raided Dhamoni and Sironj and began realising *chauth* from the neighbouring districts in the Mughul empire. Within a few years Chhatra Sal captured Kalinjar and Dhamoni and ravaged the whole of Malwa. He attained so great a success that Aurangzeb was obliged to make peace with him in 1705 and appointed him a mansabdar of 4,000 with a post in the Dakhin army. After the emperor's death in 1707 Chhatra Sal returned to Bundelkhand to establish himself as an independent ruler.

Aurangzeb's Dakhin Policy

During the first half of his reign, Aurangzeb left the affairs of the Dakhin in the hands of his governors who did not have much difficulty in dealing with the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda which were in the process of decay. Bijapur was more defiant than Golkunda and the imperial troops had to be employed against the former on several occasions. The ruler of Golkunda, Abdulla Qutub Shah (1626-72), was an indolent and pleasure-loving prince who spent most of his time in the company of women and left the administration in the hands of his favourites. Abul Hasan who succeeded him did not prove better and allowed the state affairs to be managed by his two Brahman ministers, Madanna and Akkanna. He made a defensive alliance with Shivaji and promised him a subsidy of five lakhs of rupees a year.

As soon as Aurangzeb was free from the war of succession, he despatched Jai Singh of Jaipur early in 1665 to chastise Bijapur for evading the terms of the treaty of August 1657. Jai Singh was also commissioned to put down Shivaji. The Rajput general first of all humbled Shivaji by a masterly campaign which was concluded by the capitulation of Purandar in June 1665. Next, he invaded Bijapur with the co-operation of Shivaji who had now become an ally of the Mughuls. After a long preliminary campaign in which the Mughuls were greatly harassed by the guerilla tactics of Bijapur troops, Jai Singh advanced to within 12 miles of Bijapur fort. The sultan had greatly strengthened the defences of his capital and devastated the country around for six miles so as not to leave any

means of subsistence for the advancing enemy. Jai Singh's plan was to capture the impregnable fort by a *coup de main*, but this was not possible in view of the vigilance of the sultan's troops. The Rajput general consequently decided to retreat, but had to suffer great losses as the Bijapuris attacked him and obliged him to fight two battles. At the same time, the Mughul ally Shivaji failed to capture the fort of Panhala. After suffering heavy losses Jai Singh returned to Aurangabad. Bijapur was much heartened by the success and was joined by Golkunda. Aurangzeb censured Jai Singh and recalled him to court. The general died broken-hearted on the way at Burhanpur (12th July, 1666).

For about 10 years Bijapur enjoyed immunity from Mughul attack. During this period Sultan Ali Adil Shah II, addicted to wine and women, had entrusted the administration to a capable minister named Abdul Muhammad who gave peace and prosperity to the country. On the sultan's death, Sikandar Adil Shah, a child of four, became king in December 1672, and a civil war broke out among the nobles who became divided into two factions, the one consisting of the Afghans and the other of the Dakhinis and the Abbyssinians. Taking advantage of this, Bahadur Khan, the Mughul governor, invaded Bijapur in 1676, but was defeated. The emperor was angry and recalled Bahadur Khan and appointed Diler Khan governor of the Dakhin. This man's intrigues with Sidi Masud, the minister of Bijapur, succeeded in making that kingdom a virtual dependency of the Mughuls. The sultan's sister was sent to Delhi to be married to prince Azam, Aurangzeb's son. But Masud soon alienated Diler Khan by making a secret pact with Shivaji. Masud prepared to fight, but as he got no assistance from the Marathas, he reverted to an alliance with Diler Khan who sent an army to assist Bijapur and capture Bhupalgarh from the Marathas. Bijapur by this time was reduced to anarchy owing to the civil war among its nobles. Diler Khan taking advantage of the situation demanded that Masud should be retired as minister in favour of his (Diler's) nominee. As Masud refused to comply, Diler Khan invaded Bijapur in September 1679, but failed to achieve success on account of the Maratha assistance to Masud and the hostility of Shah Alam, the newly appointed governor of the Dakhin. Such was the disturbed condition of Bijapur when Aurangzeb in person arrived in the Dakhin in 1681.

The third power in the Dakhin was that of the Marathas who had emerged into importance under their leader Shivaji whose father

Shahji Bhonsale was originally a small jagirdar in the service of the sultan of Ahmadnagar but had eventually become a kingmaker in that state. Shahji was, however, defeated by Shah Jahan in 1636 after which he entered the service of the sultan of Bijapur as a leading Hindu general. His jagir in the Poona district was given to his son Shivaji, while his second son Vyankoji inherited his territory in the Arcot district. Shivaji destined to be a great leader and liberator of the Hindus of southern India, entered on a career of conquest at the age of twenty and acquired several forts from Bijapur. Next, he conquered the principality of Javali and doubled the extent of his dominion. In 1656 he first came into conflict with the Mughuls and raided Ahmadnagar and Junar. But Aurangzeb, who was then governor of the Dakhin, took reprisals and ravaged the Maratha villages. When Bijapur concluded a peace with the Mughuls in August 1657, Shivaji also submitted and was forgiven by Aurangzeb, though only outwardly. Aurangzeb's real intention was to crush Shivaji after he was free from the war of succession.

During Aurangzeb's absence from the Dakhin, Shivaji planned the conquest to Konkan and occupied Kalyan, Bhiwanimandi and Mahuli. The Bijapur government at last made a grand preparation to crush Shivaji and sent Afzal Khan to accomplish this object. But Shivaji forestalled Afzal's designs of treacherous attack and slew him at an interview and attacked and dispersed his army (November 20, 1659). He followed up his success by occupying south Konkan and the Kolhapur district. In 1660 Bijapur made another attempt to get rid of Shivaji and its general Sidi Jauhar besieged him in Panhala fort and compelled him to evacuate it. At this very time Shayista Khan, the Mughul viceroy of the Dakhin, occupied Poona and the fort of Chakan. Shivaji defeated Shayista Khan's army in the north Konkan and continued fighting with the Mughuls for two years with varying success. During the mid-night of April 15, 1663, Shivaji surprised Shayista Khan's camp in Poona wounding the Mughul viceroy and killing one of his sons, one officer, 40 attendants and 6 women and wounding a number of others including his two other sons. Shayista Khan was thoroughly frightened and was recalled by Aurangzeb. Next, Shivaji sacked the city of Surat and acquired a valuable booty estimated at one crore of rupees. Aurangzeb now despatched Jai Singh with instructions to subjugate Shivaji. The great Rajput general and diplomat succeeded in his mission. By clever diplomacy he instigated many an important

Dakhini nobles to oppose Shivaji and thus he established a ring of enemies around him. Next the Raja besieged the fort of Purandar and at the same time sent an army into the heart of Maharashtra to plunder and burn the villages there. When Purandar was about to fall, Shivaji surrendered it, interviewed Jai Singh and entered into a treaty on 22nd June, 1664, by which he ceded to the empire three-fourth of his territories and forts, retaining only one-fourth for himself. He acknowledged the suzerainty of the emperor and bound to send a contingent of 5,000 horse for service in the Mughul army. He loyally assisted Jai Singh in the Mughul invasion of Bijapur. After this great success, Jai Singh successfully persuaded Shivaji to pay a visit to the emperor at Agra, holding out great prospects for the Maratha hero. He was introduced to the emperor in the Diwan-i-Khas on May 22, 1666, and made to stand in the row occupied by the mansabdars of 5,000. Shivaji felt humiliated at this undignified treatment, made a loud protest against it in the open darbar, and left it in anger. He was, therefore, arrested and imprisoned in the Jaipur House at Agra and forbidden to attend the court. But he escaped from the prison after three months of captivity by concealing himself and his son Shambhuji in two large baskets of sweetmeats and reached Maharashtra after twenty-five days' travel by unfrequented routes. Aurangzeb was stunned and made all possible arrangements for his capture, but without success. For three years after his return Shivaji did not invade the Mughul territory and made peace with Aurangzeb who recognised him as an independent ruler. But in January 1670, a fresh war broke out between him and the Mughuls as the result of which Shivaji recovered all the territories and forts which he had ceded by the treaty of Purandar of 1665. He plundered Surat a second time in October 1670. Next, he made raids on Aurangabad and the Mughul provinces of Baglan, Khandesh and Barar and defeated a number of Mughul armies under tried generals. Aurangzeb was greatly worried by Shivaji's daring success and appointed Bahadur Khan, subsequently entitled Khan Jahan, governor of the Dakhin to check the Maratha progress and, if possible, to put down Shivaji for good. His five years' governorship failed to accomplish this task and Shivaji achieved success after success, and levied *chauth* from the Mughul territory in the Dakhin. He conquered Ramnagar and Jawhar. He celebrated his coronation as an independent Chhatrapati at Raigarh on June 16, 1674. After this, he conquered the Karnatak and part of Mysore. Shivaji gave assistance to Bijapur

which under its regent Sidi Masud entered into a treaty with the Maratha king in 1678, and attacked the Mughul territory. But he was entrapped by Ranmast Khan and escaped only after losing 4,000 of his men and all his booty. His health was greatly impaired in this campaign and on return he fell ill and died on April 14, 1680. He was succeeded by his eldest living son Shambhuji, but not without opposition.

Shambhuji, who followed his father's policy of raiding the Mughul territory in the Dakhin, attacked and plundered Burhanpur early in February 1681. In June he learnt of the arrival of prince Akbar accompanied by Durga Das Rathor and agreed to give him shelter and to support him with a Maratha army for capturing the throne of Delhi. While negotiations for settling the details of the proposed alliance and expedition were still going on, Aurangzeb who had patched up a peace with Jai Singh of Mewar, sent a powerful force under his son Azam to pursue Akbar and himself hastening to the Dakhin, reached Burhanpur on 23rd November, 1681. The emperor opened a vigorous offensive against Shambhuji sending four armies to invade Maharashtra simultaneously from the four different directions. Sayyid Hasan Ali Khan was despatched to north Konkan, Shahab-ud-din Khan to Nasik, Ruh-Ulla Khan and prince Shah Alam to Ahmadnagar district to guard it against a possible Maratha attack, and prince Azam was sent to Bijapur to cut off Maratha supplies and prevent the sultan from sending any assistance to them. But the emperor did not gain any substantial advantage in 1682 and all the armies had to be recalled in April 1683. Fortunately for him at this time, Shambhuji invaded the Portuguese territory and made peace with the Mughuls. Prince Akbar who was disappointed in not getting real assistance from Shambhuji, left Pali, his residence, and decided to proceed to the Portuguese territory and from there in a ship to Persia to take refuge with the Shah. But he was persuaded by Durga Das and Kavi Kalash, Shambhuji's prime minister, to return from Vingurla where he had bought a ship and was about to sail for Persia. Akbar wasted another year (1684) in sloth, without getting adequate aid from Shambhuji whose government was distracted by the jealousy of the local nobles against the prime minister, Kavi Kalash, who was a Kanyakubja Brahman from northern India and, therefore, was hated as foreigner at the Maratha capital. Akbar, therefore, could take up no offensive against his father.

On the other hand, Aurangzeb took advantage of the confusion at the court of Raigarh and planned another offensive in September 1683. While the Sidi of Janjira was directed to keep a watch on Akbar's movements, a strong force under Shah Alam was sent into the south Konkan to launch a main attack on the Maratha territory. At the same time, strong divisions were posted at Poona, Nasik and Akalkot to overawe the people and to prevent them from assisting the Maratha king. Shah Alam entered Savantvadi, occupied Bicholim and planned to capture Goa by treachery. This alienated the Portuguese who stopped supplying grain to the prince who now proceeded northwards, plundering and burning the Maratha towns and villages, but was obliged to return to the north of Goa on account of a famine. Shah Alam had to return to the Ramghat Pass where about one-third of his troops and quite a large number of beasts of burden perished through pestilence, compelling him to return to Ahmadnagar without having been able to achieve anything against the Marathas. But the Mughuls achieved a great success in other quarters; the Maratha army was beaten more than once and prince Akbar in despair was compelled to sail for Persia from Rajapur in February 1686. He reached the Persian court in January 1688. Another Mughul army under Maqarrab Khan surprised Shambhuji at Sangameshwar, 22 miles from Ratnagiri, where the Maratha king had taken shelter and was absorbed in drink and merry-making. Shambhuji with his minister Kavi Kalash and 25 of his chief followers were taken prisoners on 11th February, 1689. These were brought to Aurangzeb's camp at Bahadurgarh, dressed as baffoons in a long procession, accompanied by drums and trumpets. Aurangzeb offered to spare Shambhuji's life if he surrendered his forts and treasures; but the Maratha king refused to do so and openly abused him and his Prophet and asked for one of his daughters to be given to him in marriage. So he was tortured and his limbs were mutilated one by one for 24 days and then finaly hacked to pieces on March 21, 1689. Kavi Kalash was similarly tortured and hacked to pieces.

Extinction of the Bijapur kingdom, 1686

While Aurangzeb was conducting operations against the Marathas, he felt that it was practically impossible to destroy them without first completely subjugating the Shia kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda, which were directly or indirectly sending assistance to

the Maratha king Shambhuji. Consequently, after a short period of lull, the emperor planned a final campaign against Bijapur, the government of which under the ministership of Sharza Khan had grown very weak. The capital city Bijapur was besieged in April 1685, and the operations begun under prince Azam. Fifteen months' siege produced little impression on the garrison, as the fort was not completely invested and supplies and reinforcements continued coming from Shambhuji, the sultan of Golkunda and from Masud, ex-minister of Bijapur, who had established himself as an independent ruler at Adoni. On the other hand, the imperialists suffered from want of supplies. They were, however, soon reinforced by Gazi-ud-din Firoz Jang. Nevertheless, they did not succeed in capturing the fort. So, Aurangzeb himself proceeded to Bijapur on July 13, 1686, and under his personal direction, the siege was pressed with vigour. The emperor personally supervised the operations and exhorted his men by his presence. The garrison, which had been suffering from lack of provisions, lost heart and surrendered on September 22, 1686. Sultan Sikandar, the ruler of the Adil Shahi dynasty, waited on Aurangzeb and was well received. He was deprived of his kingdom, was enrolled a mansabdar in the Mughul service with the title of 'Khan', and was given an annual pension of one lakh. Aurangzeb entered the evacuated city on 22nd, erased all pictures and Shia inscriptions on the walls of the Adil Shahi palace, and annexed the Bijapur kingdom, taking the ex-ruler's officers in his service.

Fall of Golkunda, 1687

Next, the emperor turned his attention towards the kingdom of Golkunda which had enjoyed immunity from Mughul attack for about 30 years, the sultan paying his tribute regularly. King Abul Hasan, the last ruler of the Qutub Shahi dynasty, had placed the administration in the hands of his Brahman minister Madanna and spent most of his time in the company of courtesans and dancing girls. The predominance of Hindu influence at Golkunda and the latter's alliance with the Maratha King Shambhuji were particularly offensive to Aurangzeb. The immediate occasion of the outbreak of hostility, however, was the interception of the sultan's letter to his agent in the imperial camp in which the Qutub Shah had called Aurangzeb "a mean-minded coward for attacking a helpless young orphan like Sikandar Adil Shah," and mentioned that

he would despatch a powerful force to support Bijapur. The emperor took offence and in July 1685, sent Shah Alam to capture Hyderabad; but the prince was held up at Malkhed by a Golkunda army and obtained no success. But in October Mir Muhammad Ibrahim, commander-in-chief of the Golkunda army, who was bribed by the Mughuls, deserted his master and joined Aurangzeb. The sultan was, therefore, obliged to abandon Hyderabad and flee to the fort of Golkunda. Hyderabad was occupied by Shah Alam. The sultan feeling helpless submitted and was pardoned on the condition of (a) paying one crore and twenty lakhs of rupees, besides an annual tribute of two lakhs of *huns*, (b) dismissing Madanna and, Akkanna, and (c) ceding Malkhed and Seram to the empire. But sultan Abul Hasan for some time hesitated to dismiss Madanna and, therefore, the Muslim noble and the two dowager queens of Golkunda had Madanna and Akkanna murdered in the streets of the city and their houses and families plundered and destroyed. This was followed by a general attack on the Hindu population of Golkunda. The Mughuls were now satisfied and evacuated the Golkunda territory.

In Aurangzeb's scheme of things, an independent Golkunda was an offence and therefore after the annexation of Bijapur, he resumed operations against king Abul Hasan. The emperor in person arrived before the walls of Golkunda on February 7, 1687, and defeated the sultan's troops arrayed outside the walls. Then the fort was invested. Prince Shah Alam, however, accepted presents from the sultan and at the latter's request prepared to get him pardoned. Being apprised of the secret negotiations, Aurangzeb put Shah Alam and his family under arrest and confiscated his property. The emperor brushed aside the indifference of some of his nobles, particularly Shias, who were against a war with the brother Muslims and pushed on the siege with vigour, inspite of incessant fire from the walls of the fort which was well-supplied with guns and ammunition. But the imperial operations were hampered by scarcity of provisions and by incessant rains. The garrison took advantage of the Mughul difficulties and surprised the enemy advance battery in the night of 15th June, took Ghairat Khan, the chief of Mughul artillery and 13 other high officers as prisoners. The Mughuls, however, succeeded in recovering their lost battery on 29th June. Aurangzeb ordered three mines to be dug under the bastions of the fort and filled them with powder, the first of which was fired on 30th

June. But it was misdirected and killed 1,100 imperialists. At this time the garrison made a sortie and occupied the Mughul trenches and out-posts. They were, however, defeated and driven back into the fort. The second mine when fired produced the same disastrous result and was followed by a sortie from the fort and in the struggle that followed, the Mughuls received the worst of it and had to turn back on account of the ground being flooded with water. The Mughuls thus failed to capture the fort and the siege continued. On account of repeated failures, rain and famine the morale of the Mughul army sank low. Hundreds of their troops died from starvation and the Golkunda garrison gave them no rest. But Aurangzeb with the grim determination, that characterised him, continued the siege and issued a proclamation annexing the Golkunda kingdom and calling upon its people not to send any assistance to their former ruler besieged in the fort at Golkunda.

While the emperor attained no appreciable success in open fighting, he had recourse to bribery and captured Golkunda through the treachery of an Afghan servant of the sultan, named Abdulla Pani, who opened the eastern gate of the fort at 3 o'clock in the morning of October 2, 1687, for Ruh-ulla Khan to enter into. The only Golkunda officer to offer resistance to the Mughul columns who were pouring into the fort was Abdur Razzaq Lari, but he was overpowered and almost crushed, being covered with 70 wounds on his body. Ruh-ulla entered the palace of sultan Abul Hasan who calmly prepared to meet his fate and after taking breakfast and consoling the members of his family, he left his palace for good and was introduced by prince Azam to Aurangzeb who accused him of "encouraging the Brahmans and discouraging the Moors, to the dishonour of their religion and country," and thus justly brought this punishment on his head. He was sent a prisoner to the fortress of Daultabad and was given an allowance of 50,000 rupees a year. The emperor acquired from Golkunda 7 crores of rupees in cash, besides other valuables, like jewels, jewellery, gold and silver and furniture made of gold and silver. He took steps to take possession of the territories and forts of the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda and occupied Sagar, Adoni, Kurnool, Raichur, Sera, Banglore, Bankapur, Belgaum, Wandiwash and Conjeeveram.

The Maratha War of Independence, 1689—1707

As has been already described, Aurangzeb after the fall of

Bijapur and Golkunda, redoubled his efforts against the Maratha king Shambhuji and had him captured and put to death in March 1689. The Maratha capital Raigarh fell soon after, but the new Maratha king Raja Ram, younger brother of the deceased Shambhuji, escaped in the disguise of a hermit on 15th April and reached the fort of Jinji on 11th November. Raigarh fell on 29th October and the members of Shambhuji's family, including his son Shahu, then a boy of seven, were taken prisoners. Aurangzeb was now (end of 1689) the master of the entire country including the Dakhin, but his success was short-lived and within a few years the Marathas not only challenged his supremacy but also made his position precarious by countless raids on his territory and camp. The emperor sent an army to besiege Raja Ram in Jinji, but that fortress could not be captured until January 18, 1698. Raja Ram who had received timely warning escaped to Vellore. After Shambhuji's death, the emperor made light of the Maratha power and during 1690 and 1691, he occupied himself with taking possession of the Bijapur and Golkunda dominions. Very soon, however, he was awakened to the reality of the situation when he found himself confronted by a people's war. After the death of their king, Maratha leaders, like Ram Chandra Bavdekar, Shankarji Malhar, Parashuram Trimbak and Prahlad Niraji, planned comprehensive campaign against the Mughul invader on several fronts under a number of competent and enthusiastic commanders Ram Chandra Bavdekar became the dictator with full authority over all the officials and commanders in Maharashtra. He appointed two capable generals, Dhanaji Jadav and Santaji Ghorpare to conduct operations against the Mughuls. These two moved to and fro from one theatre of war to another across the Dakhin peninsula and by their guerilla tactics inflicted the greatest loss on the emperor and caused boundless confusion among the Mughuls. "The difficulties of Aurangzeb were multiplied," writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "by the disappearance of a common head and central government among the Marathas, because every petty Maratha captain now fought and plundered in a different quarter on his own acccount. The Marathas were no longer a tribe of bandits or local rebels, but one dominating factor of Deccan politics, an enemy all prevasive throughout the Indian peninsula, elusive as the wind, the all and rallying point of the enemies of Delhi empire and of disturber of public peace and regular administration throughout the Deccan and even in

Malwa, Gondwana and Bundelkhand. The imperialists could not be present everywhere in full strength ; hence they suffered reverses in places."

The Maratha people were paralysed for about one year only after the death of Shambhuji, the siege of their capital and the flight of their new king Raja Ram to Jinji, but seeing that the emperor was occupied in taking possession of the territories of the fallen Bijapur and Golkunda kingdoms, they recovered themselves from the shock and organised two theatres of warfare against the Mughuls ; one, as related above, in Maharashtra proper under Ram Chandra Bavdekar with the powers of a dictator, and the other under Prahlad Niraji with the same powers in the eastern theatre in Karnatak. The actual operations were in the hands of Dhanaji Jadav and Santaji Ghorpare who "frequently passed from one theatre of war to the other across the peninsula and caused greatest loss and confusion to the Mughuls."

The eastern Karnatak, which had been conquered by the Muslims in the middle of the 17th century, was divided into two parts known as the Hyderabadi and Bijapuri regions. In 1677 Shivaji had conquered Jinji and the adjoining districts. Thus Karnatak now became divided into three independent parts. Shivaji's son-in-law Hiraji, who was in-charge of the Maratha territory in the Karnatak, conquered most of the Hyderabadi Karnatak north of the Palar river. On Hiraji's death in September 1689, Raja Ram took possession of the Jinji territory and was besieged in Jinji by Zulfiqar Khan about the middle of September 1690. This fortress was almost impregnable and the siege lasted till 18th January, 1698, when it was stormed and Raja Ram fled to Vishalgarh. During this period both the Mughuls and the Marathas suffered great losses, the former much more than the latter, and Zulfiqar Khan was compelled to raise the siege more than once and eventually obliged to enter into a secret understanding with Raja Ram. After the fall of Jinji the war was transferred to the western of the Maharashtra sector.

In Maharashtra proper the war continued languidly. The first Maratha success was a victory over Sharza Khan who was captured near Satara on 4th June, 1690, along with his whole family and entire camp after losing 1,500 of his troops. The Marathas quickly regained Pratapgarh, Rohira, Raigarh and Torna. In 1692 they recovered Panhala, Santaji and Dhanaji

falling on the confused Mughuls and harassing them. Santaji succeeded even in levying *chauth* in the imperial region of Malkhed. In December 1695, Santaji by swift march surprised Qasim Khan who was ordered by Aurangzeb to intercept that commander, inflicted upon him a crushing defeat and plundered the Mughul general's camp. Qasim Khan committed suicide and the remnant of his force had to promise to Santaji a ransom of 20 lakhs of rupees. In January 1696, Santaji defeated and killed another Mughul general, Himmat Khan, and plundered his baggage. Unfortunately, there ensued a quarrel between Santaji Ghorpare and Dhanaji Jadav each of whom was candidate for the post of commander-in-chief, which terminated in a battle and the murder of Santaji, who, though a general of uncommon ability and dash, was an ill-tempered and insubordinate officer and had given great offence to Raja Ram. This civil war among the Marathas gave a temporary respite to the Mughuls for about a year. During 1697 and 1698 fighting continued and Raja Ram who had fled to Vishalgarh escaped capture near Parenda. Raja Ram died at Sinhgarh on 12th March, 1700 and after a short dispute between Shivaji III and Shambhuji II, the former was recognised as the king of the Marathas on account of his mother Tara Bai's influence and ability. Inspite of these dissensions in the rank of their enemy the Mughuls failed to achieve a considerable success even in Maharashtra proper. They, however, took Kalyan and some other places in the northern Konkan. Eventually Aurangzeb realised that it was impossible to crush the Marathas and therefore in May 1695, he sent prince Shah Alam to take charge of the Panjab, Sind and Afghanistan and later look after the affairs of northern India, while he personally established his headquarters at Brahmapuri in the heart of Maharashtra to continue warfare with the Marathas, but he did not succeed. The Marathas by their incessant guerilla activities compelled the emperor to be on the defensive in Maharashtra and Kanara. The imperial officers were greatly tired and terror-stricken and many of them entered into private understanding with the Marathas and shared with them the plunder acquired from the Mughul territory. "The Mughul administration," rightly observes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "had really dissolved and only the presence of the emperor held it together, but merely as a phantom rule." Aurangzeb, in the circumstances, followed the illusive policy of besieging the Maratha forts in person but did not succeed, as when he captured one fort, another slipped

out of his possession and this continued till his death. As Sir Judunath writes, "The rest of his life is a repetition of the same sickening tale ; a hill fort captured by him in person after a vast expenditure of time, men and money, the fort recovered by the Marathas from the weak Mughul garrison after a few months and its siege begun again a year or two later. His soldiers and camp followers suffered unspeakable hardships in marching over flooded rivers, muddy roads and broken hill tracts ; porters disappeared, transport beasts died of hunger and overwork, scarcity of grain was ever present in the camp and the Maratha and Berad 'thieves' (as he officially called them) not far off. The mutual jealousy of his generals ruined his cause or delayed his success. The siege of eight forts, Satara, Parli, Panhala, Khelna (Vishalgarh), Kondhana (Sinhgarh), Raigarh, Torna and Wagingera, besides five places of lesser note occupied him for five years and a half (1699-1705) after which the broken down old man of eighty-eight retired to die."

The continuous hard labour weakened Aurangzeb's health and he fell very ill after the capture of the fort of Wagingera, which caused consternation among his troops on account of the uncertainty of their future in the enemy country ; but the emperor recovered from illness and proceeded slowly to Ahmadnagar where he arrived on January 31, 1706. His twenty-five years' warfare in the Dakhin desolated southern India and caused great misery. His policy in that region proved barren and emboldened the Marathas on account of its failure. The Maratha generals followed Aurangzeb on his journey to Ahmadnagar, cutting off his supplies and communications, falling upon the stragglers and threatening to attack the emperor's own camp. "When attacked by the Mughuls in force, they would fall back a little, but like water parted by the oar would close again as soon as the attackers retired on their main body." They were no longer a band of plundering cavalry, but were equipped with artillery and other requirements of a regular army. When the emperor reached Ahmadnagar they besieged his camp and were repulsed only after a long and severe fighting in May 1706. At this time they began breaking in and invading the adjacent Mughul provinces, like Gujarat, Khandesh and even Malwa. Dhanaji Jadav invaded Berar and Khandesh. The Marathas plundered an imperial convoy which was on its way from Aurangabad to Ahmadnagar. In the midst of these troubles, Aurangzeb died on March 3, 1707. He was buried near the tomb of Shaikh Zain-ul-Haq, four miles west of Daulatabad.

Aurangzeb's Dakhin policy had met with a disastrous failure. Far from crushing the Marathas, it had compelled them to organise themselves into a nation and to take up the offensive against the empire. His last days were gloomy on account of his fear about the future of his dynasty and empire. Inspite of Aurangzeb's anxiety to avoid a war of succession among his sons, prince Azam planned to get rid of his brother Kam Bakhsh and to seize the throne for himself. A few days before his death, Aurangzeb had appointed him governor of Malwa, but he returned from the way on learning of his father's death and began making preparations for war with his brothers, Shah Alam and Kam Bakhsh and winning the throne for himself. The example had been set by Aurangzeb himself.

Administration

Aurangzeb's administration was a highly centralised despotism. All authority was concentrated in the hands of the emperor who, like Louis XIV of France, was his own prime minister. Being an extremely industrious man, he looked into the minutest details of administration, himself read the petitions submitted to him and either wrote orders with his own hand or dictated them. All his officers, ministers including, were kept under his strict control and were never allowed to share with him the initiation or formulation of policy. This was because Aurangzeb would not tolerate a rival authority in the state. He was extremely jealous of the royal prerogative and was strict in the enforcement of his orders. When it was reported that Ibrahim Khan, governor of Bangal, held court seated on a couch with the *qazi* and other officers sitting humbly on the floor, Aurangzeb directed his wazir "to write to him in a caustic vein that if he was unable to sit on the ground by reason of any disease, he was excused till his restoration to his health and he should urge his doctors to cure him soon." He rebuked prince Muazzam for saying his prayers after setting up canvas screens which was a special prerogative of the king. He used to say : "If a single rule is disregarded all the regulations will be destroyed." On account of the over-centralisation of the administration and his narrow conception of duty, Aurangzeb's ministers were reduced to the status of mere clerks and all initiative and fearlessness in assuming responsibilities were taken from them. This resulted in great administrative degeneration and helplessness. As has been already given, the emperor was a staunch believer in the Islamic theory of the state. As such he followed the *Shara* in

everything, political, administrative or economic, and laboured hard to convert India into a Muslim country. Thus, though the framework of the administration remained the same as under his predecessors, a vast change occurred in the manner and the spirit in which the institutions were worked.

At Aurangzeb's death in 1707, the Mughul empire consisted of twenty-one provinces, fourteen of which were situated in northern India, one, i.e., Afghanistan, outside India, and the remaining six in the Dakhin. They were Agra, Ajmer, Allahabad, Awadh, Bangal, Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Kashmir, Lahore, Malwa, Multan, Orissa, Thatta (Sind), Kabul, Aurangabad, Berar, Bidar (Telingana), Bijapur, Hyderabad and Khandesh. The empire extended from the Hindukush to the river Cokeroom, north of Tanjore ; but the Mughul authority was disputed in Maharashtra, Kanara, Mysore and the eastern Karnatak. As in the time of Akbar, every province had a governor, a diwan and several other officers who were appointed by the emperor and were responsible to him. Despite Aurangzeb's strictness and ability as a ruler, the provincial administration greatly deteriorated on account of his more than twenty-five years' absence from northern India and continuous wars in the Dakhin. Law and order were disregarded by local chiefs and zamindars in several provinces as the natural result of the weakening of the central authority caused by the emperor's absorption in never-ending wars and also on account of his unwise policy of religious intolerance.

The land revenue of the empire, as calculated by the historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar, amounted to thirty-three crores and eighty-five lakhs of rupees. Besides the land revenue, other important sources of government income were *zakat* (tithe realised from Muslims), *jizya* (poll tax from Hindus), salt tax, customs duty, mint and spoils from war. Aurangzeb believed in the Islamic theory of taxes and, therefore, remitted non-Islamic taxes and imposed the pilgrim's tax and *jizya* on the Hindus which compensated him for the loss in revenue caused by the abolition of many illegal taxes and *abwabs*. The mode of assessment and collection of revenue established by Akbar under the name of Todar Mal's ryotwari system was allowed to fall into disuse, and its place was taken by the farming system, i.e., allowing the contractors to realise the revenue from the tillers of the soil and not by the officials of the state under the direct supervision of the government. On account of this change the condition of the teeming millions was worse than under Akbar or Jahangir.

Foreign trade did not occupy an important place in the economy of the Mughul empire. India exported indigo and cotton goods. After agriculture, cotton industry provided occupation to the largest number of people. The chief imports into the country were glassware, copper, lead and woollen cloth. Horses from Persia and spices from the Dutch Indies, glassware, wine and curiosities from Europe, slaves from Abyssinia and superior kinds of tobacco from America, were also imported. But the volume of trade was small and the government's income from import duties was not more than 30 lakhs of rupees a year.

The Mughul army under Aurangezeb had increased considerably. He was engaged in fighting throughout his life and naturally, therefore, he needed a much larger army than his predecessors. According to Sir Jadunath's calculation, the emperor's total force in 1647 was as follows : two lakhs cavalry, 8000 mansabdars, 7000 ahdis and barqandazes, one lakh and eighty-five thousand troops under the princes, nobles and mansabdars, and forty thousand infantry armed with musket and guns. There was a great increase in the number during the later years of his reign on account of the Dakhin wars. The expenditure on the army under Aurangzeb was roughly double that under Shah Jahan. But inspite of the emperor's vigilance and strictness and his ability as a general, the organisation and discipline of the Mughul army were far inferior to those in the time of Akbar. There was also a deterioration in the morale of the Mughul troops.

Personality and character

There has in recent years been a great controversy about the personality, character and achievements of Aurangzeb. One school of writers has attempted to prove that Aurangzeb was free from religious bigotry, that he gave grants of lands to Hindu temples and priests, and that if he ordered the destruction of Hindu temples, he did so during the time of war or to reclaim those mosques which had been forcibly occupied by the Hindus and converted into temples. Some teachers of history in this country go to the extent of preaching in the sheltered atmosphere of their class-rooms that Aurangzeb was a great Indian patriot who laboured hard to bring about the political unification of the entire country, although they fight shy of committing their arguments and conclusions to writing. These views are so palpably false that they hardly merit refutation. It may at once

be conceded that Aurangzeb did bestow grants of lands on a few priests or their temples, but these grants were either the confirmation or renewal of the land already held by the grantees, or made in order to reward certain individuals who had proved serviceable to the emperor or to win them over and use them as pawns in his game of diplomacy. Moreover, if Aurangzeb bestowed grants of lands on one Hindu priest or temple, he destroyed a thousand temples and deprived a thousand Hindu priests of their means of subsistence. If the British rulers of India patronised a few Indians by bestowing favours on them during our struggle for freedom, will it be fair to infer that they did so because they were honestly anxious to advance the interest of the country ? Will it not, on the other hand, be more correct to say that they did so in order to use them as instruments in furtherance of their imperialistic designs ? It is again correct to say that Aurangzeb laboured hard to conquer those parts of the country which were yet outside the Mughul empire. But all this endeavour towards the political unification of India was with one aim and that was to convert the whole of it into an Islamic country. None but a perverted intellect would imagine that Aurangzeb wanted the political unity of India for its own sake. The theory of only war-time destruction of temples is a pure invention of his modern apologists and finds no confirmation in contemporary writings. One can easily understand the anxiety of modern Muslim writers to paint their ideal hero, who did so much for their religion, in bright colours, and to make us believe that Islam is a religion of peace and does not sanction forcible conversion, much less religious atrocity committed in its name. Similarly, the desire of a few Hindu scholars to ignore the great injustice done to their religion and culture for the sake of communal harmony and peace in the India of today can also be appreciated. But it may be questioned whether this laudable object can be achieved by falsifying history. Hard facts are more eloquent than logic and facts as given in the contemporary works, including Aurangzeb's own letters and despatches, reveal an exactly different state of affairs and point to a different conclusion.

The correct picture of Aurangzeb's personality and character has been presented in Sir Jadunath Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib* in 5 volumes, a monumental work which it is impossible to improve upon. Even if fresh material is discovered hereafter Sir Jadunath's main conclusions about this Mughul ruler shall remain unaltered.

Aurangzeb's private life was almost ideal. He was an extremely industrious man, methodical and disciplined in habits and thought, and an indefatigable worker. In food and dress he was very simple, and the number of his wives in his long life never exceeded the Quranic limit of four at a time. He was also faithful to conjugal love, had no weakness for women, abstained completely from wine and was free from other defects so common among born aristocrats. Possessed of an inborn taste for scholarly pursuits, he was a master of Arabic and Persian and could also speak Turki and Hindi with fluency. He was a lover of books and an accurate scholar. He assiduously cultivated self-control, self-knowledge and self-reverence, and exercised a curb over his tongue and temper. He was humble and considerate and thoroughly devoted to his religion, praying five times every day, keeping the fast of Ramzan and meticulously going through other observances prescribed by the Quran. If there were any defects in his private life, they were his ambition, obstinacy and narrow religious bigotry which made him believe that all others were wrong and he was right, and that all other religions, except Islam, were false.

It is in his dealings with others that Aurangzeb falls short of the commonly recognised standard of a good man. Not endowed with strong family affections and sense of gratitude, he did not prove to be a good son. He deposed and imprisoned his father and brushed aside his piteous appeals without ceremony. We have no evidence to believe that he cherished the memory of his mother. As a brother he can by no standard be called good. He fought and killed his brothers and some of his other male relatives, in some cases in violation of his pledged word. He was a suspicious father who kept his three sons in prison, eldest of whom died in confinement and the second was released after nearly eight years' imprisonment and humiliation. One of his daughters, Zeb-un-nisa, was similarly thrown into prison to end her miserable life there. Though true to wedded love, he never really showed devotion to any of his wives. In his relations with friends he was cold and reserved. He was, no doubt, considerate and even humble to his superiors when he wanted to gain a point, but normally generosity in politics was folly in his eyes. It is no wonder, therefore, that he was suspicious of all around him and hardly thought it worthwhile to repose confidence in man or woman.

As a soldier and general, Aurangzeb surpassed most monarchs

of his dynasty and challenges comparison with Babur and Akbar. He possessed a great physical courage, endurance and coldness of temperament and never refused to risk his person in the thick of a battle. He displayed considerable presence of mind and fearlessness during the Balkh campaign and in the midst of fighting dismounted his horse in order to offer the obligatory *zuhar* prayer. He was a good strategist and always took advantage of his enemy's mistakes and weakness. It was his habit to make use of stratagems and political cunning to defeat his enemy, as is shown in the case of the Sisodia and Rathor Rajputs whom he deceived by writing a false letter to his son Akbar and letting it fall in the hands of the latter's Rajput allies. He was a past master in diplomacy and statecraft and his judgment and power of resolve were extraordinary. He was fond of discipline and devoted to the business of government in letter and spirit. As an administrator, he bestowed meticulous care on every detail of the business of his government. In fact, he attempted to do all that is humanly possible for a king and gave himself no rest.

Inspite of his intellectual acumen, devotion to duty and superhuman industry, Aurangzeb cannot be called a great or a successful ruler of men, for he lacked that supreme quality needed in every king, named solicitude, for the welfare of *all* his subjects. He had a narrow conception of duty, considered himself to be king of Sunni Musalmans only, and treated all non-Muslims in the country as inferior people as long as they did not embrace Islam. In a word, Aurangzeb's ideal was to transform India into an Islamic state. Obsessed by this narrow sense of duty, he laboured all through his life to realise his ambition, but as it turned out he laboured only to destroy and not to build and consequently failed to achieve success. He had no comprehensive programme for the economic and social good of the people. His fiscal policy and social legislation were discriminatory and devised to repress more than three-fourths of his subjects and to reduce them to the status of hewers of wood and drawers of water. In the administration of justice, too, he very often ignored all other considerations except that of serving the cause of his religion. Of the parties to a disputed succession, the one that accepted the king's offer of turning Muslim, was put in possession of a jagir or state whether he was entitled to it or not. A criminal was set free, if he renounced his ancestral religion and embraced Islam. His unalloyed despotism and distrust of others

urged him to supervise personally every detail of administration. This reduced his ministers and other high officers to the status of clerks and made them during the long period of his reign helpless puppets without initiative or sense of responsibility. The result was complete administrative degeneration. He did nothing for the cultural regeneration of the country and the development of arts, like architecture, music and painting. Nor did he advance the cause of scholarship to any great extent. During the last twenty years of his reign he even failed to maintain peace and order on account of his engagement in the interminable Dakhin wars, and rebellions broke out in many parts of northern India. Sir Jadunath Sarkar rightly observes that such a ruler cannot be called a statesman. When judged as a king, he must be pronounced a failure. He never learnt the first principle of honest kingship, that is, "that there cannot be a great empire without a great people." No individual in the history of India, barring Muhammad Ali Jinnah in the thirties and forties of the present century, ever did so much to widen the gulf between the two principal communities in her population than Aurangzeb.

Whether seen as a private individual or as king one is struck by two basic qualities in Aurangzeb's character : worldly ambition and religious fanaticism. It is difficult to say whether this 'puritan' monarch would have preferred the kingdom of heaven to the kingdom of India. Probably he prepared himself assiduously and fought stubbornly for the latter in order to be able to establish *his* God's kingdom in India—the Islamic state of the orthodox Sunni Jurist's conception—which was never realised.

Causes of Aurangzeb's failure

Aurangzeb's administration was a highly centralised despotism with all power concentrated in his hands. As such the success of his government depended mostly on the personal ability and vigour of the sovereign. As long as Aurangzeb possessed physical fitness, things at least seemingly went on well, but inspite of his endeavour to appear in the public darbar and transact business, he, in his old age, began losing his grip over the governors in distant provinces and people everywhere felt that things were passing from his control. That was but inevitable, for such is always the fate of a despotic administration. In the second place, Aurangzeb's genius had its own limitations. However well-read, intelligent and shrewd, he

could not always have a correct understanding of the country's problems and devise a correct remedy to meet the emergency. His outlook of life was so narrow that it was not possible for him to take long view of things and legislate accordingly. His study of political problems was coloured by his religious prejudices and consequently his measures were always vitiated. Thirdly, apart from the general defect of outlook Aurangzeb had placed before him a narrow ideal of duty, and that was to live and function as the king of the Sunni minority only—in short, as the ruler of an Islamic state—which made it incumbent on him to enforce the Quranic law, reduce the non-Muslims in the country to the status of helots and compel them to embrace Islam. However desirable such a policy could be in a purely Muslim country, it was impossible of realisation in India where more than 80% of the people were Hindus with the determination to stick to their ancestral faith and culture which were far older and to them more sublime than any other religion. Little did Aurangzeb realise the opposition he was sure to meet with and the consequences which were sure to follow the abandonment of the traditional policy of religious toleration devised by his great ancestor Akbar. He persecuted the Shias, particularly Ismaili and Daudi Bohras, and put down their teachings and practices. Persian Shias whose genius had shown brilliantly in the revenue and military departments alike, and who had made the reigns of Akbar and Shah Jahan glorious, were discriminated against in the royal service. Fourthly, the emperor failed to train his sons and to share with them the burden of administering his vast empire. His own conduct towards his father had prepared him to expect a similar treatment from his sons who were consequently kept at an arm's length and under strict surveillance. Aurangzeb was highly suspicious of all his sons and daughters and surrounded them by spies who reported every detail of their activities and aspirations. The result was that far from being helpful to their father, the imperial princes not only failed to develop initiative and a sense of responsibility but very often thwarted him and acted against his declared policy. In fact, they repaid the emperor's suspicion by ambitious intrigues against him. Fifthly, his personal ability and industry and long experience of administration, no less than his ambition and jealousy, begot in him a profoundest distrust for his ministers and other officers who, he thought, were not competent enough to carry out their duties as successfully as they should do. On account of this, Aurangzeb

attempted to supervise the minutest details of his administration and left merely routine work in the hands of his ministers who, as we have already said before, were thereby reduced to the status of mere clerks and puppets incapable of initiating a policy or taking timely action to meet an emergency. The result was a complete administrative degeneration. The imperial officers looked helplessly to the emperor for orders and guidance in times of crisis and mismanaged the administration. Sixthly, Aurangzeb committed the mistake of alienating the sympathies of the Rajputs and converting them into his enemies at a time when the empire needed their assistance most. Akbar had made the Rajputs the staunchest supporters of his dynasty and empire by a policy of friendship and religious tolerance. These had not only stood by the imperial throne in times of danger and difficulty, but also carried the Mughul banner to the farthest corners of India and also abroad, and even fought against their own kith and kin to extend the boundaries of the Mughul empire, justifying, as the historian Badayuni says, Mulla Shirin's contention that "the Hindu wields the sword of Islam." Aurangzeb's unwise policy turned them into enemies and compelled the Sisodias, Rathors and some other Rajput clans to remain in rebellion till the emperor's death. Seventhly, he provoked other martial elements in the Hindu population, such as, Jats, Sikhs, Bundelas and Marathas, who drained the life-blood of the empire and distracted the emperor's attention in times of crisis. Eighthly, his Dakhin policy which aimed at the destruction of the Marathas and the extinction of the Shia kingdoms of that region was a grave blunder. His engagements in the Dakhin wars for 26 long years led to the disorganisation of the central government and gave an opportunity to the disaffected elements in northern India to raise their heads in rebellion which could not be completely crushed. Ninthly, he wrongly imagined that successful rule implied only the conduct of political, military and religious administration of a country and sadly neglected the economic and cultural progress and shunned music, painting and other fine arts. He did practically nothing to improve architecture. Consequently the Indian civilisation during his long rule of about fifty years declined greatly. Tenthly, barring the first 24 years of his reign, he even failed to maintain law and order and to give security of life and property to the teeming millons of this country. In fact, he failed to protect his own camp and followers from the ever-recurring Maratha raids from which fear he was relieved by his death on March 3, 1707.

25

RISE OF THE MARATHA POWER

The history of the Mughul empire in India cannot be complete without reference to the rise of the Marathas under their great leader Shivaji, who and his successors played an important part in bringing about the downfall of that empire. In this chapter an attempt has been made to give a connected narrative of the rise of the Maratha power and the institutions which they built up for the governance of the people in their charge.

Marathas before Shivaji

Before the rise of Shivaji the Marathas, whose original home was Maharashtra, i.e., the western edge of the Dakhin plateau, were scattered like atoms in south India. They were a poor down-trodden people, engaged mainly in agriculure, with a few top-ranking families in the service of the Muslim kingdoms of the Dakhin, and figuring as military commanders and jagirdars. They were granted jagirs and enjoyed the status of second or third-rate nobles at the court of these kingdoms. But as a people, the Marathas had homogeneous society of their own, which was characterised by social and economic equality, besides a common religion and culture, and outlook on life. There were very few rich men among them and Marathi was their common language and Hinduism their common religion. They were a simple and hardy people, devoted to their faith and hospitable to their guests. They were self-reliant, courageous, brave and proud. Three hundred years' Muslim domination made them more cunning than chivalrous. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Maharashtra witnessed a religious movement which brought forth many religious teachers some of whom belonged to the lower castes and rubbed shoulders with the highest in the country. These teachers preached the Bhakti cult, emphasised the essential equality of all irrespective of caste and economic position, and laboured hard to foster a sense of Hindu unity. The names of Tukaram, Ram Das, Vaman Pandit, Eknath and a few others are even now household words throughout Maharashtra. Their teachings, some of which were committed to writing, developed the Marathi language and

produced a community of creed and life and democratic temper in the people and therefore a solidarity which was unknown elsewhere in the sub-continent of India. The only things wanting to make them a nation were political power and independence which were supplied by Shivaji in the second half of the 17th century. The rise of the Marathas was, therefore, not a sudden or an isolated phenomenon as Grant Duff held in the 19th century ; it was the natural result of about two hundred years' preparation under the stress of a religious and social movement which called forth the latent energy of the people and gave them a new life and hope.

Shivaji's birth and boyhood

Shivaji's ancestors belonged to the Bhonsle clan of the Maratha caste, and were the headmen of the villages of Hingani, Beradi and Divalgaon in the Poona district, then in the possession of the Nizam Shahi sultan of Ahmadnagar. The head of this family in the middle of the 16th century was Balaji who had two sons. Maloji and Vithoji. They migrated to the village of Virul (Ellora) situated at the end of the Daulatabad hills and took service as common soldiers under Jadav Rao of Sindh-Kher who was a noble of the sultan of Ahmadnagar. It is said that Jadav Rao one day remarked that Maloji's little son Shahji would be a good match for his own daughter Jijabai, whereupon Maloji asked the guests present to witness that Jadav Rao had betrothed his daughter to his son. Jadav Rao was angry and dismissed Maloji from his service. On return to his village Maloji is said to have discovered a buried treasure in his field and with the help of the money he and his brother recruited one thousand troops and took service under Nimbalkar of Phaltan. Next, he joined the service of the sultan of Ahmadnagar and rose to importance. Jadav Rao of Sindh-Kher now saw no harm in giving his daughter Jijabai in marriage to Maloji's son Shahji. This very Shahji rose to be an important commander and noble of Ahmadnagar. He first came to notice during the ministership of Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar, when he was sent to raid the east Khandesh which belonged to the Mughuls. At this time the Mughul emperor Shah Jahan was attempting to conquer the Ahmadnagar kingdom and Shahji took advantage of this opportunity and tried to conquer himself the country from Junnar to Ahmadnagar. He joined the Mughuls, but left them after a year. Next, he entered the service of the sultan

of Bijapur and won the support of the famous Maratha noble Murari Jagadeva, the right hand man of Khawas Khan, the wazir of Bijapur. As the kingdom of Ahmadnagar was at this time in the process of dissolution, Shahji seized its territory from Poona and Chakan to the vicinity of Ahmadnagar and Nasik. With the assistance of the sultan of Bijapur, he crowned a boy as the king of Ahmadnagar in August 1633 and for three years carried on the government in his name. But in 1636 he was compelled to surrender this boy king to the Mughuls. He finally entered the Bijapur service and carved out "a vast estate for himself in the Mysore plateau and the Eastern Karnatak and rose to be the foremost vassal of the sultan of Bijapur."

Shivaji was the son of this Shahji Bhonsle by his first wife Jijabai. He was born in the hill fort of Shivner, near the city of Junnar, north of Poona, on Monday, 20th April 1627 (9th March, 1630 according to another and less probable version), and removed to Poona when he was about ten years of age. Jijabai was at this time neglected by Shahji who had married another and a more beautiful lady, Tukabai Mohite, and consequently left the former with her baby, Shivaji, under the guardianship of a devoted steward, Dadaji Kond-deva, first in Shivner and then at Poona, and did not meet them for a few years. Jijabai was a highly devout and pious lady. On account of Shahji's neglect, Shivaji and his mother became thoroughly attached to each other and the young boy's love for his mother verged on "almost an adoration for a deity". Shivaji grew up into a fearless boy with no sense of subordination to a higher authority, and was instructed in the Hindu religion and Shastras by his mother and his tutor and guardian Dadaji Kond-deva. He was given military training and became skilled in racing, riding and other military accomplishments. But he did not learn to read and write. Though illiterate, he mastered the contents of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* and the Hindu shastras through the ear. He was fond of participating in religious *kirtans*, and of the society of saints—Hindu or Muslim. Shivaji owed his early administrative training to the instruction and example of Dadaji Kond-deva who was a practical man of affairs. At the age of twelve, he was assigned the jagir of Poona by his father and his marriage with Sai Bai Nimbalkar took place at Banglore (Shahji's headquarters) in or about 1641. The land of Shivaji's birth and early activity, known as Maval country, being full of hills and valleys and studded with forts which often changed masters, inspired him with the spirit of

adventure which gradually developed into patriotic fervour. The people who inhabited the Maval country were mostly Kolis and Marathas ; they were very hardy and industrious and formed a good material for a first-class fighting force. Shivaji gathered round him a large number of young men from among these people and started on a career of capturing fort after fort. The decay of Ahmadnagar and the Bijapur kingdoms, the unsettled condition of the country and want of peace and security among the people made Shivaji adopt a career of adventure and have the ambition of acquiring for himself a position of independent sovereignty. It is doubtful whether at this time he conceived any design of standing forth as a liberator of the Hindus from the Muslim domination. Whatever might have been his true intention, he began at an early age capturing the forts in the neighbourhood of Poona. Dadaji Kond-deva was filled with grief at his ward's adventure and felt it beneath the dignity of a first-grade noble's son to indulge in such an activity and refused to live the soft and comfortable life of a hereditary grandee. Dadaji died in March 1647 and Shivaji now became his own master at the age of twenty.

His early conquests : Capture of Javli

Shivaji's first acquisition was the hill fort of Torna from its Bijapur commandant in 1646. He found a treasure of two lakhs of *hun* in this fort and wisely utilised it in raising an army and building a new fort, five miles east of it, which he named Rajgarh. For some time, the Bijapur government could not take any action against him on account of its weakness and also because Shivaji had secured friends at the sultan's court by bribing the ministers. Meanwhile Shivaji acquired the forts of Chakan and Kondana. But about the middle of 1648, his progress was checked by the news that his father was arrested and imprisoned on suspicion of disloyalty by the orders of the sultan of Bijapur. Shivaji had recourse to diplomacy and wrote to prince Murad Bakhsh, the Mughul viceroy of the Dakhin, to put pressure on the sultan of Bijapur to release Shahji. But Shah Jahan refused to do anything in the matter. The sultan, however, released Shahji early in May 1649 after the latter's sons, Shivaji and Vyankoji, had restored the forts of Banglore and Kondana to the sultan's men.

In 1648 Shivaji captured the impregnable fort of Purandar by a stratagem from Niloji Nilkanth whose father had made himself in-

dependent of Bijapur. In 1656 he conquered Javli and built the fort of Raigarh. The estate of Javli, which was in the possession of Chandra Rao More, a Maratha nobleman, lay at extreme north-western corner of the Satara district. Chandra Rao had formed an anti-Shivaji coalition with the Bijapuri governor of that region and blocked Shivaji's expansion in the south and south-west. So Shivaji formed a plot to get rid of him and capture Javli. He secured the murder of Chandra Rao by a hired assassin, attacked Javli immediately after the murder (January 25, 1656) and captured the fort. Chandra Rao's two sons fled, while his manager Hanumant Rao More was stabbed to death. Chandra Rao's sons were compelled to surrender Rairi to which they had fled after the murder of their father. The whole of Javli thus passed into Shivaji's possession, and made it possible for him to look ahead for further conquests.

"The conquest of Javli," writes the historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "was the result of deliberate murder and organised treachery on the part of Shivaji. His power was then in its infancy, and he could not afford to be scrupulous in the choice of the means of strengthening himself.....The only redeeming feature of this dark episode in his life is that the crime was not aggravated by hypocrisy. .....Shivaji never pretended that the murder of the three Mores was prompted by a desire to found a Hindu *Swaraj* or to remove from his path a treacherous enemy who had repeatedly abused his generous leniency."

The conquest of Javli was a landmark in Shivaji's career, as it opened a door for the conquest of the fresh territory south and west of his newly established kingdom. Secondly, it greatly increased the strength of his military establishment, as many thousands of Mavle infantry of the Mores entered Shivaji's service. Besides, the annexation of Javli made him the master of the Maval region which was a fine recruiting ground for his troops. Thirdly, he acquired a huge treasure that the Mores had accumulated for generations. In April 1656, he captured the strong fort of Raigarh from Chandra Rao More and made it the seat of his government. Early in October he obtained possession of the district of Supa, 35 miles south-east of Poona, by a *coup d' etat* compelling his maternal uncle (his step-mother's brother) who was in charge of it to flee to Shahji for shelter.

First clash with the Mughuls, 1657

Shivaji for the first time came into clash with the Mughuls

early in 1657, when Aurangzeb, viceroy of the Mughul Dakhin, invaded Bijapur. As the prince was seducing important Bijapur nobles and officers, Shivaji also offered his services to him on the condition that (a) he should be recognised as the legal master of the Bijapuri forts and territory which he had conquered, and (b) also of the port of Dabhol and the territory apertaining to it that he had recently annexed. Aurangzeb sent a diplomatic reply ; and Shivaji, feeling that his interest would be better served by creating a diversion in favour of Bijapur, attacked and raided the south-western corner of the Mughul Dakhin while Aurangzeb was engaged in the siege of Kalyani beyond the south-eastern corner of his viceroyalty. The Marathas raided the Chamergunda and Raisin districts to the very gates of the city of Ahmadnagar. At the same time Shivaji personally led an expedition to Junnar and carried away three lakh of *hun* in cash. Aurangzeb was obliged to detach a part of his army to drive away the Maratha raiders and take steps for the defence of the south-western frontier of Mughul Dakhin. Shivaji submitted after Bijapur had made peace with the Mughuls but Aurangzeb did not really forgive him.

Conquest of Konkan, 1657

After Aurangzeb's departure for northern India to fight for the throne, Shivaji got an opportunity to extend his dominions. In August 1657, he sent an army to attack the Sidis of Janjira which, however, did not succeed. Towards the end of the year he invaded northern Konkan which consisted of the modern districts of Thana and Kolaba. Shivaji easily captured the towns of Kalyan and Bhivandi which he converted into naval bases. He made himself the master of northern Konkan where he established regular administration. His troops plundered the neighbouring Portuguese territory of Daman which compelled the latter to promise the Maratha king an annual tribute. It was at Kalyan that a beautiful Muslim girl said to be the daughter-in-law of Mulla Ahmad Nawayat, the Bijapuri governor of the district, was seized by the Maratha troops among the booty and offered to Shivaji as a present. The Maratha king refused to dishonour her, treated her kindly, and sent her with ornaments and dresses back to her people in Bijapur.

Afzal Khan episode, 1659

The Bijapur government which had suffered a considerable

loss of her territory and forts at the hands of Shivaji, at last summoned courage and appointed Abdulla Bhatari, entitled Afzal Khan, who was a first-rate noble and general, to put down Shivaji. The general boasted in the open court "he would bring Shivaji back a captive in chains without having once to dismount from his own horse." He attempted to seduce the deshmukhs of the Maval country and officers and troops of Shivaji, and some of the deshmukhs actually joined him. Leaving Bijapur in September 1659, Afzal Khan reached Pandharpur and destroyed the images in the temple of Vithoba. Thence he proceeded to Wai and realised a fine of two lakhs of rupees from Bajaji Nayak Nimbalkar for having sided with Shivaji. He sent his troops to rob and desecrate the Hindu temples of the locality. With the help of the Mores of Javli, who were Shivaji's enemies, Afzal Khan resolved to penetrate into the Maval country and attack Shivaji in Poona. But as Shivaji had taken his stand in the jungle district of Javli, Afzal Khan gave up his policy of a direct attack and tried to lure Shivaji into a trap and therefore proceeded to Pratapgarh and encamped there. He sent Krishnaji Bhaskar to Shivaji to request him to come and see him (Afzal) promising to get Shivaji confirmed in the possession of Konkan and the forts which he then held. The message added : "I shall secure for yourself further distinctions and military equipment from our government. If you wish to attend the court, you will be welcomed. Or, if you want to be excused make personal attendance there, and you will be exempted."

The Maratha court was divided on the policy to be adopted against Afzal Khan. Shivaji's officers advised submission, but he, brushing aside the advice, resolved to confront the invader boldly. He got scent of Afzal Khan's treacherous design from Krishnaji Bhaskar and accepted his proposal of an interview on the condition that the latter gave him a solemn assurance of safety. Afzal Khan gave the assurance demanded. Shivaji's envoy Pantaji Gopinath who was sent to ascertain the Khan's intentions reported on his return that Afzal Khan had made arrangements for his arrest at the interview. It was decided on the suggestions of Shivaji that the interview should take place at the village of Par which lay one mile south of Pratapgarh. Afzal Khan moved to Par where on an imminence below the fort a pavilion was set up for the proposed meeting. Shivaji concealed his picked troops in the forest on both the sides of the path leading to the pavilion and started for the

meeting, wearing a coat of chain-armour under his tunic and a steel cap under his turban. He concealed in his left hand a set of steel claws (*baghnakh*) and in his right sleeve a small sharp dagger called scorpion or *bichhwa*. He had two companions with him, namely, Jiv Mahala and Shambhuji Kavji who were armed each with two swords and a shield.

Afzal Khan came to the place accompanied by a strong escort of more than a thousand musketeers. Shivaji's envoy Gopi Nath requested the Khan to keep his army at a safe distance lest Shivaji should refuse to come for the meeting. This was done and Afzal Khan, like Shivaji, came to the pavilion with two armed attendants. He wanted to have a third man, named Sayyid Banda (a noted swordsman), but the latter was removed from the tent on Shivaji's protest. As Shivaji reached the edge of the pavilion, he bowed in salutation. Afzal Khan advanced a few steps, embraced Shivaji and as the latter came up to his shoulders, he bent a little to tighten his grasp in order to strangle him, and taking out his sword stuck a blow at the side of Shivaji. But as the Maratha chief had worn an armour under his coat, the blow produced no effect. Recovering from the surprise, Shivaji tore Afzal Khan's bowel open with the steel claws and quickly plunged his *bichhwa* into Afzal Khan's side. Badly wounded Afzal Khan relaxed his grip and Shivaji extracting himself ran towards his two attendants who were standing below the platform. Afzal Khan cried out in agony and Sayyid Banda stepping forward gave a blow of his sword on Shivaji's head which did no harm on account of the hidden steel cap. Jiv Mahala, meanwhile, cut off the right hand of the Sayyid and killed him. The incident occurred on 2nd November, 1659.

The Maratha troops who were concealed in the jungle now fell on the leaderless Bijapuri army which offered a desperate resistance, but was badly defeated and put to flight. Three hundred of them were slain and the remaining escaped. Shivaji obtained possession of an immense booty consisting of artillery, ammunition, treasure, elephants, horses and camels and the entire baggage of Afzal Khan's army. The booty included ten lakhs of rupees in cash and jewels. After this victory Shivaji had a grand review and rewarded all those who had played an important part in the episode.

Shivaji followed up his victory by sending his troops into south Konkan and the Kolhapur district. He captured the fort of Panhala and defeated another Bijapuri army under Rustam Zaman and Fazl

Khan, son of Afzal Khan. Vasantgarh, Khelna, Pangna and other forts in the vicinity were also taken. At the end of January 1660, he victoriously returned to Raigarh laden with a huge booty.

Loss of Panhala and Chakan, 1660

Being alarmed the sultan of Bijapur directed Sidi Jauhar, who was in charge of the district of Karnool, to undertake an expedition against Shivaji. He was assisted by Baji Ghorpade, Rustam-i-Zaman, Fazl Khan and several other officers. The Sidi invested Shivaji in the fort of Panhala and pressed the siege with vigour. Shivaji entered into an understanding with the Sidi, but as Fazl Khan was a sworn enemy of the Maratha chief, he did everything in his power to capture the fort and Shivaji had to escape to Vishalgarh which lay 27 miles to the west of Panhala. Panhala fell on 2nd October, 1660. Shivaji also lost the fort of Chakan, 18 miles north of Poona, to the Mughuls who were attacking his territory in the north, at the very time when Bijapuris were besieging him in Panhala.

Night attack on Shayista Khan, April 1663

The Mughul emperor Aurangzeb, who had now emerged successful from the war of succession, appointed Shayista Khan, his maternal uncle, as governor of the Dakhin, with instructions to root out the newly established Maratha power. Before undertaking the campaign, Shayista Khan instigated the Bijapuris to make an attack on the Maratha dominions in the south, so as to crush Shivaji between two simultaneous invasions. The Khan left Ahmadnagar early in March 1660, towards Poona and gradually captured the forts between that city and Poona. There was little organised Maratha resistance until the Khan had arrived at Saswad, ten miles south-east of Poona. Shayista Khan entered Poona on 19th May, and wanted to pass the rainy season there. But as the country in the neighbourhood had been completely devastated by the Marathas he decided to besiege the fort of Chakan, 18 miles north of Poona, so as to be able to draw supplies from Ahmadnagar, and captured it on 25th August. During this period Shivaji at Rajgarh formed a plan to compensate himself for his loss of the district of Poona and the forts of Chakan and Panhala. He defeated a detachment of Shayista Khan's army under Talab Khan who was sent to occupy those parts of Konkan which were in Maratha hands. After this, Shivaji sent a part of his army under Netaji to act against the Mughuls, while he himself invaded the Bijapuri territory in Konkan. He occupied the

entire country from Danda-Rajpuri to Khare-Patan at one rapid sweep. Little resistance was offered and most of the cities of the Ratnagiri district saved themselves from plunder by paying him *chauth*. Next he conquered the Palli-Wana state and fortified Chirdurg. After this he captured Shringarpur, the ruler of which, Surya Rao, fled to save his life. These brilliant successes were, however, marred by the loss of the city of Kalyan which was recaptured by the Mughuls. Nevertheless, as the result of two years' warfare Shivaji succeeded in bringing under his possession the southern Konkan which includes south-eastern corner of the Kolaba district and almost the whole of Ratnagiri district.

Shivaji now planned a night attack on Shayista Khan who had returned to Poona in August 1660, after capturing Chakan and taken up his residence in the very house where Shivaji had passed his childhood. Accompanied by 400 chosen troops, the Maratha chief left Singhgarh and reached Poona after nightfall on 15th April, 1663. Questioned by the Mughul guards while he was entering the limits of Shayista Khan's camp, he replied that they were Maratha soldiers of the imperial army and were going to their appointed places. The party reached Shayista Khan's quarters at mid-night and entered into the house by breaking open a small door which had been closed with bricks and mud. Shivaji was the first to enter and was followed by 200 of his men. Having reached the Khan's bed-room he made an attack on him. Shayista Khan had just been roused and was arming himself when the attack was made and he escaped in the darkness losing his thumb. The Marathas killed many women in the Khan's harem in the darkness without knowing their sex. The other half of Shivaji's army, 200 strong, meanwhile, fell on the main guards outside Shayista Khan's harem and caused great confusion among the Mughul troops. Shayista Khan's son Abdul Fatah hurried to his father's assistance but was slain. The same was the fate of other Mughul captains. Now that all the Mughul troops were awake, Shivaji collected his men and left the camp, and the confounded Mughuls could not pursue the Marathas. The night attack was a complete success. Shayista Khan had lost one of his sons, 40 of his attendants, 6 of his wives and slave-girls ; 2 of his other sons and 8 other women were among the wounded. This happened on 15th April, 1663. Shivaji's prestige soared up very high, while Shayista Khan was seized with humiliation. Aurangzeb was enraged and punished him by transferring him to Bangal.

Sack of Surat, 1664

After this bold adventure Shivaji undertook a greater feat by making a forced march to Surat, the richest port in the country and plundering it. The plan was kept a closely guarded secret, and while he declared that he was proceeding towards the south, he actually moved towards the north. Leaving Nasik on 10th January (1st January O.S.), 1664, he made a dash for Surat travelling at a lightning speed. The city was filled with alarm and many people fled with their families for safety outside. Inayat Khan, the governor, left the town and took shelter in the fort and sent his agent to treat with Shivaji who had arrived in the morning of 16th January and encamped in a garden outside the Burhanpur Gate. He detained the envoy and plundered the city for four days. Thousands of houses were burnt to ashes and two-thirds of the town was destroyed. The cowardly Mughul governor hired an assassin to murder Shivaji, but the attack failed as the assassin's right hand was cut off by one of Shivaji's body-guards. The enraged Maratha troops wanted to start a general massacre of the people but Shivaji forbade it and only cut off the hands of a few prisoners. The English merchants defended their factory and did not pay a ransom of three lakhs of rupees imposed upon them by the Maratha chief. Shivaji had acquired so much of booty that he did not care to send a reply to the English or attack their fortified factory. The plunder acquired from Surat amounted to more than a crore of rupees. As the English wrote, Shivaji "scorned to carry away anything but gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and such precious wares." On the 19th Shivaji received news that a Mughul force was coming rapidly for the relief of the town and, therefore, he left Surat suddenly on 20th January, 1664. Shivaji's plea for the sack of Surat was his revenge for the Mughul invasion of his country. Another cause was love of money.

Shivaji enjoyed immunity from the Mughul attack througout 1664. Prince Muazzam, governor of the Mughul Dakhin, remained encamped at Aurangabad and Jaswant Singh at Poona, and the latter besieged the fort of Kondana, but failed to capture it, and Shivaji was practically free to roam about and harass the Mughuls. He plundered Ahmadnagar early in August and invaded Kanara after the rainy season.

Shahji died on February 2, 1664, and his second son Vyankoji succeeded to his estate in Mysore and the Eastern Karnatak.

Jai Singh's invasion of Maharashtra ; Treaty of Purandar, 1665

Stung by Shayista Khan's failure and the sack of Surat Aurangzeb appointed his bravest general Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Amber to put down Shivaji, placed under him a host of able officers, and liberally equipped him with money and material. The Raja had an unbroken record of victories in war and diplomacy both in India and Central Asia, and was famous for his courage and ability, besides foresight, political cunning and cool calculating policy. These qualities added to his personal charm and the fact of his being a Hindu made him an ideal general for a contest with Shivaji. He crossed the Narmada on 19th January, 1665, and without wasting time entered Poona on 13th March and took over charge from Jaswant Singh of Marwar. Conscious of the enormity of his task, Jai Singh chalked out a comprehensive plan of action against Shivaji and took up his position in the eastern part of the latter's dominion so as to be between the Maratha territory and that of the sultan of Bijapur whom he wanted to prevent from assisting the Marathas. In fact, the Raja, anxious to instigate all important elements in the Dakhin against Shivaji so as to distract his attention by attacks from all possible quarters, asked for the assistance of the sultan of Bijapur, holding out a prospect of imperial favour and reduction of his tribute. He asked the Portuguese of Goa and Sidi of Janjira to attack Shivaji's territory, and won over many zamindars of Maharashtra and Karnatak by liberal offers. In this he achieved a great success. All those who bore a grudge to Shivaji, such as the Mores who were expelled from Javli, Fazl Khan, son of Afzal Khan and the expelled rajas of the Koli country north of Kalyan, joined Jai Singh.

From Saswad as his base Jai Singh began his campaign sending a detachment of his army to ravage the Maratha villages in the valleys to the south-west of that town. He then proceeded to besiege Shivaji in Purandar and launched his attack on Vajragarh which was a sister fort and lay on a bridge east of Purandar. It was completely invested. Batteries were set up and bombardment commenced. The raja captured Vajragarh on 22nd April and wisely allowed the garrison to leave for their homes without molestation in order to tempt the garrison of Purandar to surrender without fighting. Jai Singh had already sent flying columns of his army to ravage Shivaji's villages in the regions of Rajgarh, Singhgarh (Kondana) and Rohira and not to leave any trace of cultivation or habitation.

These columns performed their task to the Raja's satisfaction, defeated the Maratha troops and looted and burnt the villages, some of which had never before been visited by an enemy. Meanwhile, the siege of Purandar continued and the Maratha attempt to raise it proved futile. After the capture of Vajragarh, Jai Singh ordered his men to advance along the connecting ridge and besiege the lower fort (Machi) of Purandar. Trenches were dug at north-eastern angle of the fort and the Maratha sorties were repelled. Jai Singh had a high wooden platform of logs and planks prepared and small guns mounted on it so as to bombard the fort and silence the enemy activity. Inspite of the obstruction created by the garrison, the wooden platform was ready. The Mughuls now tried to storm the White Tower which the Marathas had to vacate owing to heavy fire and to retire into the Black Tower behind. Even there they could not stand and had to fall back in a stockade adjoining the wall of the tower. They were compelled to abandon it too and take shelter in the trenches behind. Thus as the result of two months' siege and fighting Jai Singh captured five towers and one stockade of the lower fort, and it became clear that the main fort of Purandar could not defy him for long. The Rajput general now concentrated his troops on the main fort, and in one of the sorties made by the Marathas their gallant commander Murar Baji Prabhu lost his life with 300 of his men after slaying 500 Pathans and many infantry men. A grim fate seemed to await the garrison and the families of the Maratha officers in Purandar.

The unprecedented reverses suffered by his troops in the siege of Purandar as well as by raids in the very heart of his dominion compelled Shivaji to decide to make peace by offering to submit. He had for some time exchanged envoys with Jai Singh and now he resolved to see the Rajput chief and offer terms, and if his offer was rejected he would join the sultan of Bijapur and continue the war with the Mughuls to the bitter end. Jai Singh insisted on Shivaji's coming in person and making an unconditional surrender and then only he would consider the proposal for a treaty. After Jai Singh had promised him a safe conduct Shivaji proceeded on the morning of 24th June, 1665, to meet the Rajput general in his camp. Jai Singh, however, sent word that unless Shivaji agreed to surrender all his forts, he need not come for an interview. Shivaji agreed and proceeded on and was welcomed at the door of the tents by Jai Singh's Bakhshi. Jai Singh himself advanced a few steps, embraced

Shivaji and seated him by his side. Jai Singh had instructed Diler Khan and Kirat Singh to launch an attack on Purandar, while Shivaji was with him so as to convince the latter of the hopelessness of the Maratha position. This was done and a Maratha sortie was repulsed with the loss of eighty Marathas killed and many wounded. Shivaji who could see the fighting from the Rajput camp, offered to surrender Purandar and begged Jai Singh to stop the useless slaughter of his men. Accordingly, Jai Singh instructed his men to stop fighting and Shivaji sent one of his officers to ask the garrison to capitulate. These orders were complied with.

The two rajas negotiated terms till mid-night and came to an agreement. This is known as the treaty of Purandar of 1665. Its terms were : (1) Shivaji surrendered 23 forts and the territory appertaining to them which yielded an annual revenue of four lakhs of *hun*. These were annexed to the Mughul empire. (2) Twelve of Shivaji's forts including Rajgarh and the land appertaining to them with an annual revenue of one lakh of *hun* was allowed to remain in his possession "on condition of service and loyalty to the imperial throne". (3) Shivaji was exempted from personal attendance at the Mughul court, but his son Shambhuji was to serve the emperor with a contingent of 5,000 horse and was to be paid by grant of a jagir. Shivaji, however, promised to fight for the empire in the Dakhin.

To the treaty of Purandar was added subsequently another clause which in the words of Shivaji ran as follows : "If lands yielding four lakhs of *hun* a year in the lowlands of Konkan and five lakhs of *hun* a year in the upland (Balaghat Bijapuri) are granted to me by the emperor and I am assured by an imperial *farman* that the possession of these lands will be confirmed in me after the expected Mughul conquest of Bijapur, then I agree to pay to the emperor forty lakhs of *hun* in thirteen yearly instalments." This was assented to by Aurangzeb and it was expected that Shivaji would conquer the above territories from Bijapur without Mughul assistance. This clause was highly favourable to the Mughuls, for besides securing for them two crores of rupees in cash it was sure to make Shivaji and the sultan of Bijapur perpetual enemies. Moreover, Shivaji by engaging himself in the task of conquering the mountainous regions would have no time to give any trouble to the Mughuls in the Dakhin. It is to be noted that in return for the concession involved in the above clause Shivaji agreed "to assist the Mughuls in the

invasion of Bijapur with 2,000 cavalry of his son Shambhuji's mansab and 7,000 expert infantry under his own command." Aurangzeb accorded his approval to the treaty of Purandar and the subsequent agreement and sent a *farman* and a robe of honour for Shivaji.

Shivaji helps the Mughuls, but fails before Panhala

After this conspicuous success, Jai Singh invaded Bijapur with the object of capturing the capital of the Adil Shahi kingdom by a sudden *coup*. In accordance with the agreement Shivaji assisted him with a powerful army. The Rajput chief met with no opposition till his arrival at Mangalbira, 24 miles north of Bijapur. The Bijapuris had made every preparation for defence, collected large quantities of provisions and material in the fort and ravaged the country for a radius of seven miles so as not to leave water, grain and even trees. Jai Singh found his advance stopped at Makhnapur, ten miles north of Bijapur fort. He waited for a few weeks after which he was compelled to abandon the campaign and begin his retreat on 15th January, 1666. He had not brought heavy artillery, thinking that he would easily capture Bijapur by a sudden *coup*, but he was mistaken. So he retreated and sent Shivaji to besiege Panhala. With the intention of delivering a surprise attack on Panhala, Shivaji reached the vicinity of the fort on 26th January, but as his companion, Netaji, who was known as 'second Shivaji', failed to reach in time, he made an assault three hours before sunrise. The garrison was awake and fought bravely with the result that Shivaji had to return without capturing the fort. He took Netaji to task and therefore the latter took offence and went over to the service of Bijapur and raided the Mughul territory. Jai Singh won him back by the promise of a mansab of 5,000, a handsome jagir, and rupees 50,000 in cash.

Shivaji's visit to Agra, 1666

Jai Singh's failure against Bijapur, the defection of Netaji and his fear lest Shivaji himself should join Bijapur and turn against the Mughuls, made him persuade the Maratha chief to visit the emperor at Agra. This he did in order to remove Shivaji temporarily from the Dakhin, to put an end to the intrigues among his own officers, some of whom were hostile to Shivaji, and to retrieve his reputation with the emperor by showing that he had been instrumental in sending to the court a man like Shivaji who had abhorred bending his head before any Muslim, however great he might be. He took

pains to convince Shivaji of the high honours that he would receive at Agra and most probably held out the promise of his being sent back as the viceroy of the Mughul Dakhin. Shivaji coveted Janjira from the Sidis and Jai Singh probably promised its cession to him. Shivaji, however, accepted Jai Singh's offer only after long hesitation and after the Rajput chief and his son Ram Singh, who was the latter's representative at the court, had pledged their word for safety. Before starting, he appointed his mother Jijabai as Regent and placed the peshwa Moro Pant and Majumdar Niloji Sondev under her orders. He prescribed duties for all his officers and commandants of his forts and instructed them to follow the current rules and regulations and act on their own initiative in emergencies. He began his journey on 16th March, 1666, with his eldest son Shambhuji, five high officers and a small escort of 350 select troops.

Having reached Sarai Manikchand, a few miles south of Agra, on 21st May, he was received there by Ram Singh's *munshi*, Girdhar Lal. As Ram Singh's duty of patrolling the imperial palace fell early in the morning of the next day (22nd May), he could not proceed to receive Shivaji in person. Girdhar Lal conducted Shivaji into the city of Agra by one route, while Ram Singh after his patrol duty proceeded by another route to welcome Shivaji in advance and conduct him to the emperor. On account of this mistake instead of receiving Shivaji outside the town, he met him near the central market. As it was late in the day and Aurangzeb had left Diwan-i-Am and retired to Diwan-i-Khas, Shivaji was presented to him there by Asad Khan, the assistant Mir Bakhshi. Shivaji presented one thousand mohars and two thousand rupees as nazar, besides five thousand rupees as nisar. Aurangzeb only looked at him, but said nothing. After having presented the nazar, Shivaji was led back and made to stand in the row of the mansabdars of 5,000 which was the third line of the nobles. The Maratha chief was tired and dissatisfied for not having been welcomed on behalf of the emperor outside the capital. Now he was made to stand in the third row, and when he learnt that Maharaja Jaswant Singh was standing in front of him, he flared up, "Jaswant Singh, whose back my soldiers have seen ! I have to stand behind him ? What does it mean ?" Then came the time of the presentation of robes of honour. The royal princes, the wazir and others including Jaswant Singh were honoured with these robes, but not Shivaji. Now the Maratha chief was filled with anger. Aurangzeb noticed the commotion and inquired of

Ram Singh as to what the matter with Shivaji was. When the latter went to him, Shivaji burst forth in anger, "You have seen, your father has seen, your Padishah had seen what sort of man I am, and yet you have wilfully made me stand up so long. I cast off your mansab." Having uttered these words "he then and there turned his back to the throne and rudely walked away. Ram Singh caught hold of his hand, but Shivaji wrenched it away, came to one side (behind the pillars) and sat down there." Ram Singh failed to persuade him to return to the darbar and to all his entreaties Shivaji only said that he was prepared to die, but would never again go to the emperor's presence. Thus baffled Ram Singh reported the matter to Aurangzeb who sent three nobles with a robe of honour to pacify Shivaji and bring him back to his presence. Shivaji refused to put on this dress and refused to go back to the darbar. The nobles diplomatically reported the failure of their mission to the emperor saying that the rustic Maratha chief had fallen ill on account of unaccustomed heat of the darbar. Aurangzeb, therefore, ordered Ram Singh to take Shivaji back with him to his residence. Even the next day Shivaji did not agree to go to court and sent his son Shambhuji after a prolonged persuasion by Ram Singh. He never again set his foot in a Mughul darbar.

Aurangzeb now decided to imprison Shivaji and have him slain on one pretext or another. But he wanted to do it in such a manner as not to rouse public opinion or earn the enmity of the Rajputs, particularly of Jai Singh and his son Ram Singh who had pledged their word of honour for the Maratha chief's safety. The emperor's decision was strengthened by the intrigues in his harem and by the age-long Kachhwaha-Rathor rivalry for precedence at the court. The wives of Shayista Khan and wazir Jafar Khan who were related to the royal family and the emperor's sister Jahanara clamoured for Shivaji's blood. The Rathor party headed by Jaswant Singh desired the disgrace of Jai Singh, and hence was against Shivaji who was the former's protege. Consequently, it was decided by the emperor "either to kill Shivaji or to confine him in a fortress." First of all, guards were placed around his residence; next the emperor ordered Shivaji to be removed to the house of Radandaz Khan who was notorious for his brutality and was in charge of the state prisoners in the Agra Fort. But Ram Singh protested and therefore Aurangzeb allowed Shivaji to remain in the Jaipur House on Ram Singh's signing a security bond regarding the Maratha

chief's conduct at Agra. But Aurangzeb was not really satisfied and ordered Shivaji to accompany Radandaz Khan to fight the Yusufzai and Afridi tribes in Afghanistan. The emperor's object was to have Shivaji murdered on the way and deceive the world by announcing his death due to accident. But as Aurangzeb was awaiting Jai Singh's reply to his inquiry as to what promises he had made to Shivaji, the above plan could not at once be put into execution. Meanwhile, Shivaji won over the Mughul wazir and other high officers by huge bribes and submitted a petition through the former begging pardon for his past conduct. The emperor did not pardon him, but cancelled his order for sending him to Afghanistan. Next, Shivaji offered the emperor two crores of rupees, if he was permitted to return home and if all his forts were restored to him. He also promised to fight against Bijapur. Aurangzeb disregarded the petition and posted a large army with artillery under Sidi Faulad, the police kotwal of Agra, outside Shivaji's residence, whereas Ram Singh's men watched him inside day and night. Shivaji now became a prisoner. Left to his own resources, he devised a plan of escape from Agra. He made Ram Singh withdraw the security bond that he had given to the emperor. Next, he sent away all his troops back to the Dakhin, and announced his intention to turn a hermit and requested the emperor to allow him to go to Allahabad to pass his life there. Aurangzeb replied that he would be lodged in the Allahabad Fort where the Mughul governor "will take good care of him." Shivaji now pretended to be ill and began sending out of his residence baskets of sweetmeats for Brahmans and other religious men. In the afternoon of 29th August (19th O.S.) he and his son Shambhuji went out in two baskets slung from a pole and carried by two men on their shoulder under the pretext that they were baskets of sweetmeats. Shivaji's half-brother Hiroji Farzand who resembled him was made to lie on his bed with his right arm outstretched and adorned with the Maratha chief's gold wristlet. The baskets reached a lonely spot outside Agra from where Shivaji and his son walked to a village six miles from the city. There Niraji Raoji was present with horses. The party now disguised themselves as Hindu Sannyasis and rode to Mathura. At Mathura Shivaji left Shambhuji in the charge of a Maratha family resident there, and himself proceeded eastwards to Allahabad and from there he took the road to Bundelkhand and through Gondwana and Golkunda he returned to Rajgarh where he

reached on 22nd September, 1666, the twenty-fifth day of his escape from Agra.

At Agra Shivaji's flight became known at about ten in the morning of 30th August, two hours after Hiroji had quietly walked out of the house asking the guards not to make noise, as Shivaji was ill. Faulad Khan in reporting the matter to the emperor said that Shivaji had vanished all of a sudden from the sight of his men and either flew into the sky or disappeared into the earth by a magical trick. Aurangzeb refused to believe it and sent round men to watch the roads to the Dakhin and arrest the fugitive wherever he could be found. But all the search and toil proved of no avail. The emperor believed that the Maratha chief had fled through the connivance of Ram Singh. So he forbade him the court and then dismissed him from his post. Jai Singh in the Dakhin was filled with anxiety and felt that all his work was undone and his reputation gone. During Shivaji's captivity his great anxiety was the Maratha chief's safety for which he had pledged his word. Now he was worried about the future of himself and his son. He wrote to the emperor that he would inveigle Shivaji to an interview and have him killed. But Aurangzeb who was to regret Shivaji's flight the whole of his life, was not satisfied and removed Jai Singh from the Dakhin. The Raja made over charge to prince Muazzam and died at Burhanpur on September 7, 1667 on his way back to Agra.

Peace with the Mughuls, 1667-69

Shivaji's health had been impaired on account of imprisonment and arduous journey, and on his return he twice fell ill and had to take long rest. Moreover, prince Muazzam, the new governor, was an easy-going man and his right hand man Jaswant Singh was friendly to Shivaji. They were averse to useless war of aggression in the Dakhin. Aurangzeb too had his hands full on account of the threat of a Persian invasion and a fearful revolt of the Yusufzais and other tribes in the north-west frontier to suppress which he had to detach hosts of his troops. For these reasons Shivaji remained quiet for about three years. Some months after his return he wrote to Aurangzeb offering to fight for the empire. He contacted Jaswant Singh also, promising to send Shambhuji to serve prince Muazzam if he were pardoned by the emperor. Aurangzeb accepted prince Muazzam's recommendation for a peace and recognised Shivaji's title of 'Raja'.

Shivaji utilised these years (1667-69) in consolidating his kingdom by internal reforms. He reorganised his administration and framed a set of very wise regulations which strengthened his government and served the best interests of his people. These will be described at the end of the chapter.

Renewal of war with the Mughuls, 1670

The peace with the Mughuls was a mere truce. Shivaji's object in entering into it was to take time and prevent the possibility of a combined attack by the Mughuls, Bijapur and Golkunda. Aurangzeb too was not sincere ; being suspicious of Muazzam's friendship with Shivaji, he planned to entrap the latter a second time. If he failed in this, he would imprison Shambhuji and keep him as a hostage. A rupture occurred as Shivaji took in his service the troops who had been disbanded by the Mughul viceroy of the Dakhin on account of financial reasons, and also because Aurangzeb attempted to recover one lakh of rupees which had been advanced to Shivaji for his journey to Agra in 1666 by attaching a part of his new jagir in Berar. Shivaji, therefore, recalled his troops from the service and prepared an attack on the Mughul territory. He recovered several forts that he had surrendered by the treaty of Purandar. Of these the most important was the fort of Kondana which was captured by Tanaji Malusare by scaling the wall. Tanaji lost his life after his glorious success in the venture and Shivaji named the fort after him as Singhgarh (Feb. 1670). Purandar was next to fall and subsequently Kalyan, Bhivandi, Mahali and others. Shivaji had detached sections of his army to plunder the various parts of the Mughul territory. He himself plundered 51 villages near Ahmadnagar, Junnar and Parenda. The Maratha success was due to Shivaji's daring, highly efficient army and to the dissensions between prince Muazzam and Diler Khan. Taking advantage of the quarrel between the prince and Diler Khan which took the shape of a civil war, Shivaji made a rapid march and plundered Surat a second time on 13th October, 1670. The plunder lasted for three days, and Shivaji returned with a huge booty estimated at sixty-six lakhs of rupees. The most valuable port in the country suffered a great injury and its trade was practically destroyed. Daud Khan Qureshi attempted to intercept Shivaji while the latter was returning from Surat. But the Maratha chief managed to send home his booty safely by a ruse and defeated Daud Khan.

Shivaji followed up his success by a sudden irruption into Berar, Baglan and Khandesh. In December 1670, he raided Khandesh and captured some of the forts of the Baglan district. His commander-in-chief, Pratap Rao Gujar, plundered Bahadurpur and riding into Berar looted the city of Karanja. From this time Shivaji began levying *chauth* on the Mughul territory through which he passed. He declared that Maharashtra belonged to him and not to the Mughuls. He sent Peshwa Moro Pant Pingle into Baglan and the latter captured Trimbak and some other forts, and besieged the fort of Salher on the border of Khandesh and Gujarat. Shivaji joined him in this enterprise and Salher was captured on 15th January, 1671.

Shivaji's devastating activity roused Aurangzeb who sent Mahabat Khan to the Dakhin and directed Bahadur Khan of Gujarat to join him. But this general too failed to dislodge the Maratha chief and was recalled by the emperor who appointed Bahadur Khan and Diler Khan to take charge of the Dakhin expedition. These besieged Salher. Leaving some troops to conduct the siege, the two Mughul generals made a rapid march to Poona and Supa and plundered the former town. Shivaji, without being disturbed, played such a havoc on the Mughul troops in Khandesh that Bahadur and Diler were compelled to hurry back from Poona to the assistance of Ikhlas Khan who was reduced to great straits before the walls of Salher. In a sanguinary battle before Salher, the Mughuls were completely routed (February 1672), and Salher and Mulher were re-occupied by the Marathas. Aurangzeb was grieved to hear of the Mughul defeat at Salher and reprimanded Bahadur Khan and Diler Khan.

After the capture of Salher and Mulher, Peshwa Moro Pant descended into north Konkan and in June 1672, conquered Jawahar and Ramnagar. Most of the forts in Baglan, except Shivner, Shivaji's birth-place, surrendered to the Marathas. Bahadur Khan and Diler Khan made every attempt to check the expansion of the Maratha kingdom, transferred their headquarters from Aurangabad to Pedgaon on the Bhima, east of Poona, and constructed a large fort there (Bahadurgarh) so as to threaten Shivaji from the convenient base, but failed in their designs.

Towards the end of 1672, there was again a rupture between Shivaji and Bijapur. The Maratha chief coveted the fort of Panhala which was indispensable for the security of the southern part of his

dominion and sent Anaji Datto against it. The latter along with Kondaji Bavlekar made an assault on Panhala during the night of 16th March, 1673. The Marathas scaled the wall by means of rope ladders and opened the gate of the fort. Then they attacked the guards and killed the chief commandant Babu Khan and captured the fortress with a vast amount of wealth that was buried there. Satara and Parli followed suit. The sultan made an attempt to recover Panhala and dispatched Bahlol Khan with a powerful army for the purpose. But the Maratha commander-in-chief Pratap Rao Gujar cut off his supplies and entrapped him. Being beaten, Bahlol Khan begged for quarter and was allowed to go away; but he broke his word and again took up an offensive against the Marathas. Shivaji took his commander-in-chief to task for his misplaced generosity in allowing Bahlol Khan escape unscathed. Pratap Rao's pride was sorely touched and he challenged Bahlol Khan for a fight and in order to draw him out of his strong position plundered the town of Hubli. Bahlol Khan and Sarza Khan proceeded to save the Bijapur territory and were encountered by Pratap Rao who accompanied by only six troopers fell on Bahlol Khan in the narrow pass of Nesari near Garh-Hinglaj, one mile north of Ghataprabha river on 5th March, 1674. He was overwhelmed by an immensely superior enemy force and cut to pieces. Anand Rao, the fallen general's lieutenant, hastened to avenge Pratap Rao's death and plundered Sampgaon, the principal seat of Bahlol's jagir, and carried away a huge booty estimated at one and a half lakhs of *hun*. But Bahlol Khan remained at large. Shivaji appointed Hansaji Mohite as his commander-in-chief in place of the deceased Pratap Rao Gujar.

Shivaji's coronation, 1674

Although Shivaji had carved out an extensive kingdom for himself and ruled over it as an independent sovereign, yet he was looked upon by the sultan of Bijapur as a rebel, by the Mughul empror as a successful usurper and by many important hereditary Maratha families as an upstart whose grandfather had originally been an humble tiller of the soil. He and his ministers, therefore, felt that it was necessary that he should assume the title of king in a formal coronation so as to convince the contemporary Indian powers of his right to deal with them on terms of equality, to give legal validity to his orders or treaties, to win loyalty of his subjects, and to rectify

his position in the eyes of those Maratha families which had once been his equals or superiors in social status. Moreover, the leaders of thought in Maharashtra, who wanted the Hindu *Swaraj*, were anxious to have its fulfilment in a Hindu Chhatrapati. Hence, it was decided by Shivaji to undergo a formal coronation ceremony on a grand scale.

There was, however, one initial difficulty. Shivaji was not a Kshatriya and therefore according to ancient Hindu usage not entitled to coronation. Orthodox Brahmans in Maharashtra were averse to recognising him as a Kshatriya. Hence, Shivaji approached Vishweshwar *alias* Gaga Bhatta, the most learned and renowned Pandit of Banaras to conduct the proposed coronation ceremony. Gaga Bhatta, a master of the four Vedas, the six systems of Hindu philosophy and the entire Hindu scriptures and celebrated as "the Brahma-deva and Vyas of the modern age" acceded to the request, accepted Shivaji as a Kshatriya, and agreed to travel to Raigrah and perform the ceremony. Preparations now began to be made and a large number of learned Brahmans were employed to find out from the Shastras the details about the ceremony. Scholars were sent to Udaipur and Amber to learn the details of the existing practice followed at the coronation of the Kshatriya rulers of those states. Invitations were sent to learned Brahmans of all parts of India and many came un-invited. 11,000 Brahmans with their wives and children numbering in all 50,000 came to Raigarh and were entertained with sweets for four months. Ambassadors and envoys from most of the Indian powers and from the English and other European trading communities and visitors of various other descriptions including Brahmans and their families numbered nearly one lakh of men, women and children. Gaga Bhatta arrived and was received by Shivaji personally several miles in advance.

The ceremony began about the middle of May 1674 with Shivaji's visit to famous temples in Maharashtra. He visited Paras Ram temple at Chiplun, and Bhawani temple at Pratapgarh, and several other shrines to each of which valuable presents were made. On 7th June he performed penance for his failure to observe the Kshatriya rites so long and was invested with the sacred thread by Gaga Bhatta himself. On 8th June he was re-married with his two surviving wives according to Kshatriya rites. At his initiation into the rites of the twice-born (*dwiz*) Kshatriya, Shivaji's guru and other Brahmans uttered Vedic mantras, but the king was not allowed to

utter or repeat them owing to Brahmanical insistence that in the modern age there was no other twice-born caste except the Brahman. Next day Shivaji performed his *tuladan* in atoning for the sins committed in his own life and weighed himself seven times against each of the seven metals—gold, silver, copper, zinc, tin, lead and iron—and fine pieces of cloth and several other things, and these together with one lakh of *hun* were distributed among the Brahmans. A further sum of 8,000 rupees was paid to them as they wanted Shivaji to atone for the death of Brahmans, cows, women and children during his raids.

The 15th June, 1674, the eve of the coronation ceremony, was spent by the king in self-restraint and mortification of the flesh. On this day Gaga Bhatta was given 5,000 *hun* and other learned Brahmans a hundred gold pieces each. On the day of the coronation (June 16) Shivaji got up early in the morning, worshipped his household gods and "adored the feet of Balam Bhatta, his family priest, Gaga Bhatta and other eminent Brahmans who all received gifts of ornaments and cloth." Next, he took his seat on a gold-plated stool, clad in pure white robe and decked with ornaments. His queen sat to his left with the hem of her robe knotted with that of Shivaji and the crown prince Shambhuji sat close behind him. The ministers, eight in number, stood at the eight points of the horizon with gold jugs full of water from the sacred rivers and poured it over the heads of the king, the queen and the heir-apparent. This they did to the accompaniment of hymns and music. Next, sixteen Brahman ladies, each with five lamps laid on a gold tray, waved the lights around the king's head according to Hindu custom. This over, Shivaji changed his dress and put on a royal scarlet robe and precious ornaments. He then worshipped his weapons and bowed to his elders and Brahmans and entered the throne room which was richly decorated. He took his seat on the throne amidst the chanting of hymns and music of the band. Sixteen Brahman married women waved lights around the king's head and Brahman scholars chanted *mantras* and blessed Shivaji. Gaga Bhatta held the royal umbrella over the enthroned monarch's head and hailed him as Shiva Chhatrapati. Salvos of guns were fired at the exact time from all the forts in his kingdom. Shivaji then gave away large sums of money to the Brahmans, other people and beggars.

After the ceremony was over Shivaji passed orders and received visitors. He accepted their presents and conferred upon them royal

honours. Then he mounted his best horse, descended down the fort and taking his seat on an elephant rode through the streets of the capital in full military procession with his ministers and generals. The procession was preceded by his royal flags borne aloft on two elephants.

Shivaji was obliged to undergo a second coronation ceremony on 4th October, 1674, on the suggestion of a well-known Tantrik priest, named Nishchal Puri Goswami, who said that Gaga Bhatta had performed the ceremony at an inauspicious hour and neglected to propitiate the spirits adored in the Tantra. That was why, he said, the queen mother Jija Bai had died within twelve days of the ceremony and similar other mishaps had occurred. A practical man that he was, Shivaji agreed to perform his coronation again on 4th October, according to Tantrik rites and propitiated Nishchal Puri and his friends with rich gifts. The two coronations cost about 50 lakhs of rupees.

Renewal of war with the Mughuls

Shivaji's treasure had practically been exhausted by his coronation and he stood in need of money. So, in July he sent an army to lure the Mughul general Bahadur Khan from his headquarters at Pedgaon. Then another force was sent to fall on his camp. The stratagem succeeded and the Marathas acquired a booty of one crore in cash besides two hundred fine horses. Thus Shivaji found means to pay his troops.

There was no peace with Bijapur. Hence, the Maratha troops were sent during the rainy season to raid the Bijapur territory on the side of the Koli country. The Maratha concentration in the vicinity of Surat filled that port with alarm, but the danger passed away when the Maratha army withdrew to join Shivaji near Aurangabad. Next, he descended into Baglan and Khandesh and plundered many towns and defeated the Mughul officer, Qutab-ud-din Khan Kheshgi. Early in February 1675 the Marathas invaded Kolhapur and the town had to save itself by paying a ransom of 1,500 *hun*.

Shivaji now opened negotiations for a peace with Bahadur Khan (March—May 1675), but this produced no result. As Shivaji had only wanted to befool the Khan and not to conclude any treaty, the outwitted Bahadur Khan now entered into an alliance with Bijapur for a joint attack on Shivaji. Aurangzeb heartily approved of the measure and even offered to remit one year's tribute from Bijapur,

but the proposed joint action did not materialise on account of the dissensions at the Bijapur court and the fall of its wazir Khawas Khan. Shivaji, however, continued his aggressive activity and captured Kolhapur. Another division of his army raided the territories of Bijapur and Golkunda as far as the town of Hyderabad and brought a good deal of booty. Some of the Maratha troops plundered Veroda and other places in the Portuguese territory. During this time Bahadur Khan was not idle. He attacked Kalyan early in 1676 but failed inspite of Shivaji's serious illness. On recovery Shivaji took steps to come to terms with Bijapur. As Bahadur Khan had invaded that state, Bijapur was in a friendly mood and promised to pay Shivaji a contribution of three lakhs of rupees and an annual sum of one lakh of *hun* as subsidy for protection against the Mughuls, besides confirming the Maratha king in the possession of his country east of the river Krishna including the Kolhapur district. But the alliance between Shivaji and Bijapur did not last long as the latter state was in the process of decay and could not hold fast to a definite policy.

Shivaji invades Karnatak, 1677-78

In January 1677, Shivaji embarked on the grandest expedition of his life, the invasion of Eastern Karnatak, as his path in the north being blocked by the Mughuls, he could conveniently expand his territory in the south. The Karnatak plain or Madras coast was very wealthy and reputed for its buried treasure. It had practically been parcelled by the sultans of Golkunda and Bijapur, the former possessing the Kadapa and North Arcot districts upto the Palar river and the entire country bordering the sea from Chicacole to Sadras, while the latter ruled over the Karnool district, the whole of the Mysore plateau north of Banglore and the country from Vellore near Tanjore. Shivaji felt that he could easily make himself master of Karnatak and absorb that flourishing country with its rich towns of Vellore, Jinji and Tanjore. A pretext for the expedition was easily found. In March 1675 Shivaji's step-brother Vyankoji had seized Tanjore which was then a vassal principality of Bijapur. Vyankoji was jealous of Shivaji's achievements and did not like to merge his individuality. He quarrelled with his powerful minister Raghunath Pant Hanumante and dismissed him. Raghunath Pant visited Madanna, the famous Hindu prime minister of Golkunda and arranged a joint invasion of Karnatak by Shivaji and the sultan of

Golkunda. Shivaji, therefore, prepared for the expedition and gave out that he was going to demand his share of his father's property from his step-brother.

Before starting on the expedition Shivaji wisely secured his flank and rear by inducing Bahadur Khan, the Mughul governor of the Dakhin, to make a peace. He also won over Netaji Palkar who had been forced to become Muslim by Aurangzeb and served that emperor for ten years as Muhammad Quli. The Maratha King reconverted him to Hinduism in June 1676. When preparations were complete Shivaji left Raigarh in January 1677, proceeded to Hyderabad and was welcomed by its prime minister Madanna miles in advance and taken into the town in a grand procession. The sultan came forward, embraced Shivaji and seated him by his side on the royal *masnad*. A pact was now entered into for joint invasion of the southern regions of the east coast. Its terms were :

(a) The sultan would pay four lakhs and a half of rupees per month for the expenses of the Maratha army.

(b) He would place 5,000 troops under Mirza Muhammad Amin to join the expedition.

(c) The conquered territory would be equally divided between the two parties.

(d) The parties would jointly resist the Mughul advance against either of them.

(e) Shivaji would send an agent to reside permanently at Hyderabad, and

(f) Shivaji agreed to pay an annual tribute of one lakh of *hun* to the sultan.

At the end of March Shivaji left Hyderabad to seize Bijapuri Karnatak where his army had already preceded him. He visited several famous shrines on the way and collected *chauth* from Karnool. A contingent of 5,000 troops was despatched to capture the fort of Jinji which belonged to Bijapur. Its commandant Nisar Muhammad Khan delivered the fort to Shivaji on receiving a *jagir* of an annual income of 50,000 of rupees. Shivaji visited the fort and made it the principal seat of his government in Karnatak and reformed its fiscal administration. Next he besieged Vellore. As the fort of Vellore was not likely to surrender without a long siege, Shivaji left its conquest in the hands of his men and himself proceeded to the south against Sher Khan Lodi who was the master of that part of Karnatak and had secured the support of the French of Pondichery. Sher Khan

was defeated and compelled to submit. He interviewed Shivaji on 15th July, 1677, paid him 20,000 *hun* as war indemnity, delivered the whole of his territory and left his son as hostage for the balance of his ransom. He discharged the ransom in February 1678 whereupon his son was allowed to go and join him. At the end of July of that year Vellore, which was besieged by Shivaji's men, also surrendered and the Nayak of Madura agreed to pay a tribute of six lakhs of *hun*. The entire coastal territory of Karnatak from the Tungabhadra to the Kaveri thus passed into Shivaji's possession. The Maratha king quickly organised a regular system of civil and military administration and established garrisons in the newly conquered country. He returned home crowned with laurels of success.

Settlement with Vyankoji

At this time Vyankoji, Shivaji's half-brother, who held Mysore and Eastern Karnatak, paid him a visit and the two brothers spent a week together (July 1678). But Vyankoji became suspicious and fled to Tanjore. At the instigation of Vyankoji's ex-minister Raghunath Pant Hanumante, Shivaji, who was most probably not anxious to claim a share of his paternal property, demanded that Vyankoji should deliver half of the country that he had inherited from Shahji. Vyankoji evading, replied that being a loyal vassal of the sultan of Bijapur, he would be guided by the latter's orders. The result was an open friction and Vyankoji sought the support of the chiefs of Madura and Mysore. He even begged for the help of Bijapur, but failed to receive any as that kingdom was in the process of dissolution and therefore unwilling to pick a quarrel with Shivaji. Shivaji had no choice but to seize Vyankoji's territory to the north of the Kaveri, including the district of Arni, Kolar, Hoskote, Banglore, Balapur and Shira and to place it in charge of a governor. On Shivaji's return to Maharashtra, Vyankoji attacked his governor Hambir Rao Mohite, but was defeated. Shivaji wrote a letter of reprimand and warned him against playing into the hands of the Muslims of Bijapur. Eventually a friendly settlement was concluded between the brothers through the good offices of Raghunath Pant, the Maratha king restoring to Vyankoji practically all the territory he had seized from him on the condition of accepting his vassalage and renouncing his allegiance to the sultan of Bijapur. Raghunath Pant was rewarded by the grant of a hereditary *jagir* worth one lakh of *hun*. Although Vyankoji keenly felt the loss of his independence,

he ruled over the principality of Tanjore with moderation and success.

During Shivaji's engagement in the Karnatak the Mughul commander Bahadur Khan invaded Bijapur, but was defeated and compelled to withdraw. Aurangzeb censured and removed him, and entrusted the Dakhin supreme command to Diler Khan in August 1677. Diler Khan invaded Golkunda in order to punish the sultan for his alliance with Shivaji. On receipt of this news, Shivaji fearing a Mughul attack on his kingdom returned from Karnatak leaving his men to complete his work in that region. The Maratha king established strong lines of defensive posts from Panhala to Tanjore. On the way he met with some opposition from Savitri Bai, the Desain of Belvadi, a small village south-east of Belgaon and captured that place.

During Shivaji's absence in Karnatak, Annaji Datto and Moro Pant Pingle extended the Maratha kingdom along the west coast southwards and northwards. They plundered Baroach.

Shivaji and the Sidis of Janjira

Shivaji's cherished ambition was to extend the western frontier of his kingdom to the sea and to have a strong navy for protection as well as for trade with foreign lands. His connection with Konkan that stretched from Thana to Ratnagiri on the western coast south of Bombay began early in his career, and in 1675 he seized the naval bases of Ponda and Karwar, south of Goa, from the kingdom of Bijapur, and also annexed the neighbouring State of Sondha. The west coast from Kolaba to Malwan with fortified bases at Kolaba, Suvarnadurg, Vijaydurg and Sindudurg was already in his possession. He now constituted the coastal region under him into two governorships, the territory from Rajpuri to Malwan under one officer, and that from Malwan to Dharwar under the other. But Chaul and Janjira which lay in between continued to remain in foreign hands. Goa too could not be taken from the Portuguese.

The rocky island of Janjira, 45 miles south of Bombay, which guarded the mouth of the Rajpuri creek, was held by an Abyssinian family, known as the Sidis, first under the sultan of Ahmadnagar and after the partition of that kingdom in 1636 under that of Bijapur. The Sidis who also possessed most of the modern district of Kolaba with its headquarters at the town of Danda-Rajpuri and maintained a powerful fleet, came into conflict with Shiviji after the latter had

conquered most of Konkan. Such a clash was inevitable, for no ruler of Konkan could be safe without having in his possession the west coast-line including the island of Janjira, while mastery over the neighbouring main land was a matter of life and death to the Sidis who drew their supplies and income from it. The Sidis were strong on the sea, while Shivaji was invincible on land. He defeated the Sidis and captured Danda-Rajpuri. As he realised the importance of Janjira, he made preparations to invade it and built a powerful navy which at its best consisted of seven hundred vessels of various sizes of which nearly four hundred were fighting ships, divided into two squadrons each under an admiral (*dariya sarang*). In 1669 Shivaji's attack on Janjira pressed the Sidis hard and their leader Fateh Khan was so dis-spirited as to decide to make peace with the Maratha king, deliver Janjira to him and accept a jagir from him on the main land. But he was opposed by his colleagues who transferred their allegiance to the Mughul emperor in 1671. Aurangzeb appointed Sidi Sambal admiral and gave a jagir of the annual revenue of three lakhs of rupees. He put Sidi Qasim in charge of Janjira. The latter succeeded in recovering the fort of Danda by a surprise attack in February 1671 and some other forts in the Kolaba district. Shivaji made several attempts to recapture Danda, but failed. Nor could he conquer Janjira, though by 1675 he had brought under his effective control the whole coast of South Konkan, and fighting between the Sidis and the Marathas continued throughout the remaining years of his reign and that of his son Shambhuji.

Shambhuji's desertion

Shivaji's eldest son Shambhuji, though carefully brought up and trained to be a good soldier, became addicted to sensual pleasures. When parental admonition failed to reclaim the prince, Shivaji had him arrested in 1676 and kept him under surveillance at Sringarpur. He was given sound advice and brought into contact with the great religious teacher Ram Das. But all this proved to be of no avail. So in 1678 Shivaji confined him at Panhala. Here the prince was visited by the Mughul general Diler Khan's spies who successfully induced him by a tempting offer to join the Mughuls. During the night of 23rd December, 1678 Shambhuji with his wife Yesu Bai escaped from Panhala and proceeded towards the Mughul camp at Bahadurgarh. Diler Khan was greatly elated

and received Shambhuji on the way at Karkam. Though happy, Aurangzeb thought that Shambhuji's desertion might be a ruse on the part of Shivaji and therefore advised Diler Khan to be on his guard. After joining Diler Khan, Shambhuji and the Mughul general planned an invasion of Bijapur and attacked Bhupalgarh where Shambhuji revealed a large amount of treasure which was kept in the charge of Phirangoji Narsala. Diler Khan captured Bhupalgarh on 12th April, 1679 and killed many of the inmates. Then the two proceeded against Bijapur, the regent of which Sidi Masud appealed to Shivaji for help. Shivaji responded and attacked the Mughuls who had by this time besieged Bijapur. He assisted the Bijapuris with supplies and materials of war which compelled Diler Khan to raise the siege (November 24) and move towards Panhala in order to capture that fort. But as Diler Khan committed frightful atrocities on the people on the way and especially at Tikota where he harassed the Hindus, Shambhuji who was approached by the inhabitants for protection interceded with Diler Khan ; but the latter gave him a rebuff by saying, "I am my own master ; you have no business to teach me lessons in good conduct." The prince felt helpless and as he had received the information about Aurangzeb's instructions to Diler Khan to put him under arrest and send him a prisoner to Delhi, he was alarmed for his personal safety. So during the night of 30th November, 1679, he and his wife disguised themselves and left Diler Khan's camp at Athni with ten followers. He fled to Bijapur and took shelter with Masud Khan. Diler Khan sent his agents to Masud Khan requesting him to deliver the prince back to him and offered a heavy bribe. Shambhuji was, therefore, obliged to leave Bijapur and to flee to Panhala. Shivaji was glad to hear of the prince's return after one year, and visited Panhala and spent about a month in his company. He tried to reclaim the prince by good advice and by trying to appeal to his sense of duty and responsibility. But Shambhuji expressed no regret for his past conduct and failed to improve his ways. Nevertheless, Shivaji did not take any step against him and treated him with kindness and affection. But when he noticed no change in the prince's conduct, he confined him at Panhala, and himself left for Sajjangarh to seek solace in the company of saint Ram Das.

Death of Shivaji, April 1680

Shivaji's last days were clouded with anxiety. Shambhuji's

desertion came like a blow and he felt distressed about the future of his great kingdom. The heir-apparent had proved vicious and the king's second son Raja Ram was just a boy of ten. His chief queen Soyra Bai wanted the suppression of Shambhuji and the recognition of her son Raja Ram as heir. The two Maratha ministers Moro Pant Pingle and Annaji Datto were at logger-heads. In view of these circumstances, Shivaji entertained grave doubts about the future of the Maratha state. He discussed the matter with Guru Ram Das but found no solution. He then left for Raigarh on 14th February, 1680 and celebrated Raja Ram's sacred thread ceremony and marriage. He fell ill on 2nd April and died on 13th April, 1680.

The extent of his kingdom

Shivaji's kingdom at his death comprised all the country (except the Portuguese possessions) from Ramnagar (modern Dharampur) in the north to Karwar in the south. In the east it included Baglan, half of the Nasik and the Poona districts, the whole of Satara and much of Kolhapur district. These territories formed his *Swaraj*. In addition to the above, he had conquered the Western Karnatak extending from Belgaon to the bank of the river Tungabhadra opposite the Bellary district. All this territory was divided into three provinces, each under a governor. Besides the above, Shivaji had conquered and annexed the country extending from the Tungabhadra opposite Kopal to Vellore and Jinji. This included the northern, central and eastern parts of the modern state of Mysore, and parts of the districts of Bellary, Chittur and Arcot in Madras. In addition to these, he had imperfectly conquered the Kanara region which included the principalities of Sunda and Bednur and southern part of Dharwar.

Outside the above regions, a large area in the Dakhin was under his sphere of influence, though it did not recognise his sovereignty. This area consisted of a large part of the Mughul Dakhin from where Shivaji levied *chauth* or one-fourth of the standard assessment of the land revenue.

Shivaji's kingdom contained two hundred and forty forts and yielded a revenue of seven crores of rupees, but the actual collections were much less, probably one crore only.

Administration

As was the practice in medieval times, Shivaji was a despot with all powers concentrated in his hands. But as he stood for the

welfare of his subjects he might be called a benevolent despot. He had eight ministers to assist him in the work of administration. The ministers, however, did not form a cabinet in the modern sense of the term, for they were responsible to Shivaji alone, who appointed and dismissed them at will. But he left much work in their hands and except in matters of formulation of policy, he seldom interfered with their work. Nevertheless, the function of the ministers was purely advisory. Among the ministers the Peshwa enjoyed a higher status and royal confidence, but not supremacy over his colleagues.

The ministers, called the Asht Pradhans, were :

(1) The Prime Minister or *Peshwa* officially known as *Mukhya Pradhan*. He was responsible for the general administration and welfare of the kingdom, and, therefore, his main duties were to control other officers and promote harmony in the administration. He represented the king in his absence and put his seal below the king's to all royal letters and despatches.

(2) The Auditor or *Majumdar* or *Amatya*. His duty was to check all the accounts of income and expenditure and to countersign all statements of accounts, whether of the kingdom as a whole or of the particular districts.

(3) The Chronicler or *Waqia-Nawis* or *Mantri*. He was in charge of compiling a daily record of the king's activities and to watch over his invitation lists, meals etc., so as to guard against plots.

(4) The Superintendent or *Shuru-Nawis* or *Sachiv*. His duty was to see that all royal letters and despatches were drafted in the proper style. He had to revise the letters and despatches. One of his duties was to check the accounts of the parganas.

(5) The Foreign Secretary or *Dabir* or *Sumant*. His duty was to advise the king on matters relating to foreign states and on questions of war and peace. He had also to receive foreign ambassadors and envoys and to keep in touch with the activities of other powers.

(6) The Commander-in-Chief or *Sar-i-Naubat* or *Senapati*. He was in charge of the recruitment, organisation and discipline of the army. He had also to arrange for the disposition of the troops on the fields of battle.

(7) The Ecclesiastical Head or *Sadr* and *Muhatasib* or *Pandit Rao* or *Danadhyaksha*. His main duties were to fix dates for religious ceremonies, to punish heresy and to disburse among the

Brahmans large sums of money set apart by the king for charity. He was the judge of canon law, royal Almanac and Censor of Public Morals.

(8) The Chief Justice or *Nyayadhish*. He was the highest judge in the kingdom and responsible for civil and military justice and for endorsing judicial decisions regarding rights of lands, village headship, etc.

All the ministers except the Ecclesiastical Head and the Chief Justice were required to command armies and lead expeditions. "All royal letters, charters and treaties had to bear the seals of the king and the Peshwa and the endorsement of the next four ministers, i.e., other than the Commander-in-chief, the Ecclesiastical Head and the Chief Justice."

Local Government

Shivaji's kingdom was divided into four provinces, each under a viceroy. The northern province included Dang, Baglan, the Koli country south of Surat, Konkan north of Bombay and the Dakhin plateau (Desh) southwards to Poona. It was under Moro Trimbak Pingle. The next province or the southern division consisted of Konkan south of Bombay, the Sawant-Vadi and the North Kanara coast. It was governed by Annaji Datto. The third was the south-eastern division and comprised the districts of Satara and Kolhapur of the Dakhin plateau, the districts of Belgaon and Dharwar to Kopal west of the Tungabhadra in Karnatak. It was under Dattaji Pant. The fourth province consisted of the recently conquered country extending from the Tungabhadra opposite Kopal to Vellore and Jinji, i.e., the northern, central and eastern parts of the modern state of Mysore and portions of the Madras districts of Bellary, Chittur and Arcot. This may be called a non-regulated province, as being a recent conquest, it was held by an army of occupation.

Besides these provinces, Shivaji had almost conquered the Kanara highlands including the south Dharwar district and the states of Sunda and Bednur. This region was not actually in Shivaji's possession at the time of his death but was under his suzerainty and paid him tribute.

The provinces were sub-divided into parganas each of which must have had a Collector with a contingent of troops under his command. But we have no knowledge of the administrative details of these sub-divisions.

Army

Shivaji's army was a well-organised and disciplined force and at the time of his death consisted of 45,000 *paga* and 60,000 *silahdar* cavalry, and one lakh of Mavle infantry. He left 32,000 horses in his stables, in addition to 5,000 which were given to the Bargirs. The number of his elephants are variously given as 1260, 125 and 300. The last figure seems to be more likely.

The most important part of the army was the famous *paga* or State cavalry. Twenty-five troopers (Bargirs) formed a unit which was placed under one *havaldar*. There was one *jumladar* over every five *havaldars*, and one *one-hazari* over every ten *jumladars*, i.e., 1,250 men. The highest rank in the *paga* was *five-hazari* and at the head of the entire *paga* cavalry was a supreme commander or *sar-i-naubat* of cavalry. One water-carrier and one farrier were supplied for each unit, i.e., 25 troopers.

There was another kind of cavalry called *silahdars* or troopers who supplied their own horses and arms. These ranked lower than the *paga* horsemen, but were under the same *sar-i-naubat* of cavalry.

The infantry was the next important branch of the army. In this nine soldiers or privates (*paiks*) formed a unit and were placed under one corporal, called *nayak*. Over every five *nayaks* there was one *havaldar*, over every two or three *havaldars* one *jumladar*, and over ten *jumladars* one *hazari*. Still higher rank was the *seven-hazari*. Over *seven-hazari* there was the *sar-i-naubat* of infantry. "Shivaji's Guard Brigade of 20,000 select Mavle infantry was splendidly equipped, dressed and armed at great expense of the state."

It was Shivaji's practice to employ his army for eight months to invade foreign dominions and bring supplies. The army spent four months of rains in cantonment and was sent out after Dasehra to invade the country selected by the king. At the time of departure a list was made of all the articles in the possession of all the soldiers and officers, and when they returned they were searched and whatever was found in excess was taken by the state.

Shivaji's army was highly mobile and disciplined, and carried little baggage. No women were permitted to accompany the troops. Even the king had as little of baggage as possible. On account of its organisation, rigorous discipline and extreme simplicity Shivaji's army was irresistible in the seventeenth century.

Revenue administration

The Maratha revenue settlement under Shivaji was based on measurement of land by fixed system of mensuration. The area of each village was ascertained in detail and an estimate was made of the expected produce of each *bigha* of land. Of the produce two-fifths were taken by the state and the remaining left to the cultivators. New cultivators were given seed and cattle the value of which was recovered by the government in a number of instalments. The revenue was accepted in cash or in kind and was realised directly by the government officers.

Shivaji's revenue policy was ryotwari, and he was against revenue farmers and zamindars. He did not permit the zamindars, deshmukhs and desais to exercise political authority over the peasantry. As far as possible Shivaji was against the grant of jagirs in lieu of salary to his officers. But whenever he gave assignments of land, he saw that the assignees had no political power in their jagirs.

We have no means of ascertaining the names and rates of other taxes besides the land revenue. But there must have been import and export duties and excise taxes.

An important source of Shivaji's income was *chauth* or one-fourth of the standard revenue of the country which belonged to the neighbouring states and were raided by Shivaji to lay them under contribution. He used to realise the *chauth* every year. Another important source of income was *sardesh-mukhi* or one-tenth of the standard revenue from these states.

Religious policy

Though an orthodox Hindu, Shivaji was respectful and tolerant to all religions. He gave full freedom of conscience and worship to Muslims and respected their saints and holy places. If he made endowments for Hindu temples, he gave grants to Muslim saints' hermitages. He built a hermitage for Baba Yaqut of Keloshi. He invariably respected the Quran, and whenever in his raids copies of that book fell into the hands of his men, they were delivered to his Muslim followers to read. He respected Muslim women and never allowed his troops to dishonour them. The historian Khafi Khan, who was by no means friendly to Shivaji, praised him for his tolerance to Muslim religion and for the honourable treatment he meted out to Muslim women and children who fell into the hands of his army

during the course of his raids. He made no discrimination against Muslims in the state services, in the army and navy, and employed them even in confidential capacity.

Shivaji was a devout Hindu and he took steps to encourage Vedic scholarship. He set apart a large sum of money for the encouragement of learned Brahmans. His guru was the famous saint Ram Das from whom Shivaji derived religious inspiration, but the saint had no influence on Shivaji's state policy or administration. It is said that seeing that Ram Das went out everyday to beg alms, Shivaji made a gift of all his kingdom to him. The guru accepted the gift, but returned the kingdom to Shivaji to rule over it as vicar, advising him to hold himself responsible for all his acts to a higher authority. Shivaji agreed and adopted the red-ochre colour of Ram Das' robe for his royal flag (*Bhagwa Jhanda*) "in order to signify that he fought and ruled in the livery of his ascetic Lord Paramount and conducted himself as ever in his great Task-Master's eyes."

Character of Shivaji

Shivaji was a dutiful son, attentive husband, a loving father and a kind friend. He adored his mother, respected his father and loved his wives and children. He was a friend of the poor and down-trodden. Though not educated in the formal sense, he was highly learned and well-informed. He was gifted with extraordinary intelligence, supreme commonsense and the power of critical discrimination. He was intensely religious, abstemious and free from vice. Though an orthodox Hindu he was not a religious bigot like his contemporary Aurangzeb, and saw truth in every religion, and adored saints, both Hindu and Muslim.

He was a great military genius who instinctively adopted the guerrilla system of warfare which was well "suited to the racial character of his soldiers, the nature of the country, the weapons of the age and the internal condition of his enemies." His army was so well recruited, organised, trained and disciplined that it had become irresistible in the 17th century. A great organiser that he was, Shivaji had everything provided beforehand during a campaign. He was an idol of his soldiery with whom he shared the toils and fatigue of a battle. He was the first Indian ruler in the medieval age to perceive the necessity of building up a navy. He built dockyards and ships for trade as well as for protection.

As a ruler and administrator Shivaji achieved conspicuous

success. He created a powerful state, gave it good system of administration and did everything possible in that age to advance the moral and material interests of his subjects. He kept a firm control over his officers, civil and military, and personally looked after the minute details of his administration, though he was wise enough to delegate much of routine business to his subordinates and to give them plenty of discretion in matters connected with their daily duties. A remarkable thing about him as an administrator was that he had so organised his government, local as well as central, that it could continue functioning efficiently in his absence. This was a novel thing, as the historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar remarks, in an oriental monarchy. As a ruler Shivaji gave his subjects not only peace and universal toleration but also equal opportunities for all without distinction of caste or creed, and opened government service to talent. His system of administration was beneficient and free from corruption and partisanship. The establishment of Marathi in preference to Persian as the court language and the compilation at his instance of the Sanskrit dictionary, *Raj-Vyavahar Kosh*, made it possible for the Marathas to develop their national language. Thus as a ruler Shivaji not only placed before himself a high political ideal but also successfully endeavoured to realise it for common good.

Shivaji was a statesman of a high order, one who could instinctively perceive the possibilities of his time and gather the best elements in the country around him for the fulfilment of his life's ambition, —the establishment of a Hindu *Swaraj* in Maharashtra. He called the Marathas to a new life and welded them into a nation. When he began his task, the Mughul empire was at the height of its glory and he had other powerful enemies, like the sultans of Bijapur and Golkunda, the Sidis of Janjira and the Portuguese of the west coast to face. And yet he succeeded in the teeth of the greatest opposition from these powers. His greatest contribution, therefore, as a statesman was the life he breathed into the Maratha race. He was a great constructive genius and a true 'hero' as king, who proved to be a source of inspiration to the posterity as well as to his contemporaries. "He taught the modern Hindus," writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "to rise to the full stature of their growth. Shivaji had shown that the tree of Hinduism is not really dead, that it can rise from beneath the seemingly crushing load of centuries of political bondage, that it can put forth new leaves and branches. It can again lift up its head to the skies."

Did Shivaji want to establish a Hindu empire for the whole of India ?

The historian Sardesai is of the opinion that Shivaji did not restrict his vision to Maharashtra, but wanted to secure freedom for the Hindus of the entire sub-continent of India. He gives the following arguments in support of his view : (1) Shivaji's main object was to win religious freedom and not territory. As early as 1645, he wrote to Dadaji Naras Prabhu about his scheme of *Hindavi Swaraj*, meaning thereby his desire to strive for Hindu religious autonomy for the whole of India. Maratha men of thought and action after Shivaji interpreted his ideal and ambition in the above light. (2) "Shivaji's levy of *chauth* and *sardesh mukhi* was conceived in the spirit of an all-India instrument of expansion." (3) A contemporary Jaipur poet believed that Shivaji aspired to the imperial throne at Delhi and praised Jai Singh for having subdued such an ambitious man as the Maratha king. (4) Shivaji's journey to Agra was undertaken to acquire a first-hand knowledge of northern India and to see whether it was ready to throw off the Mughul yoke. (5) His defence of his kingdom by means of land and sea forces, his brushing aside the narrow prejudice against sea voyage and his re-admitting into Hindu society of Hindu converts to Islam, show that he had placed before him a high ideal of political and moral regeneration of the entire Hindu community. (6) While engaged in conflict with the sultans of Dakhin and the Mughuls, Shivaji did not fight with Rajput chiefs and attempted to come to an understanding with them.

The above arguments do not seem to have much force in them and are far from convincing. It does not require much argumentation to show that Hindu religious autonomy in the Mughul empire was an utter impossibility, for in practice it would have established an *imperium in imperio* and therefore could not have been conceded by any ruler much less by Aurangzeb. Although it may be conceded that the base of Shivaji's *Swaraj* was broad enough to embrace ultimately the whole of India, it is doubtful whether he ever entertained any such ambition. He was a realist and not a visionary and we have no concrete evidence to show that he ever entertained any such ambition. It is now established beyond a shadow of doubt that Shivaji spent twenty-five days, all told, in his return journey from Agra to Raigarh and had no time or opportunity to acquaint himself with conditions in northern India. His journey to Agra was not

undertaken with that object in view. Further, it is wrong to say that he did not fight with the Rajputs, unless by this we mean fighting with the Rajput chiefs as principals and not on behalf of the Mughul emperor. There was no occasion for this as far as Shivaji was concerned.

On the other hand, Shivaji did not take steps to rouse the country against the Mughuls and he only protested against the re-imposition of *jizya*. He maintained no contact with powerful Hindu rebellious elements in Northern India, such as the Jats, the Satnamis and the Sikhs. Although as a clever general he did appeal to the Hindu sentiment of Jaswant Singh and Jai Singh, he had no concrete scheme of an alliance with them or any other Rajput chiefs for the overthrow of the Mughuls. He failed to make use of the services of the enthusiastic Chhatra Sal Bundela, gave him no assistance and only advised him to go back to Bundelkhand and raise the standard of revolt against Aurangzeb. These facts militate against the theory of an all-India Hindu empire.

Causes of Shivaji's failure to build an enduring state

There were several causes of Shivaji's failure to build an enduring state. In the first place, his reign was very short, just of ten years, and he was engaged all-through in fighting with his numerous enemies, and had very little time for consolidation. Secondly, the condition of the Maratha society in the 17th century was such that it could be reformed only by a long patient and sustained effort of generations of selfless workers. In that age of instability every one clung to his *watan* or hereditary land, and for every plot of land there were more than one claimant due to either the expansion of the family and the division of the *watan* among the members, or the replacement of one owner by another by the local governors or sultans. This had given rise to constant disputes among the people in Maharashtra. After the establishment of his supremacy, Shivaji was obliged to give his decision about disputed *watans* with the result that the disappointed suitors ranged themselves against him and joined his enemies, such as the sultans of Bijapur and Golkunda or the Mughuls. Shivaji had, therefore, not only to fight his enemies, but also his own people throughout his life. Thirdly, in the 17th century, people in Maharashtra as in the rest of India were divided into minute groups or castes with great jealousy towards one another. The Brahmans despised the non-Brahmans and were themselves torn

by such divisions among them as Desh Brahmans and Konkan Brahmans, Chitpavans and Karahdes. They hated one another and meted out an uncharitable treatment even to Shivaji who had proved to be their saviour and did not allow him to utter the Vedic mantras at his coronation. Their implacable prejudice made a common action difficult, and real and permanent national solidarity an impossibility. Fourthly, Shivaji's political success created a reaction in favour of Hindu orthodoxy. The upper classes in Maharashtra on account of the importance give to them in the Maratha state began to emphasise the life of ceremonial purity which was opposed to the simple and homogeneous life of the poor. The result was a gulf between the two main classes of the Maratha society. Thus, as Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes, "Shivaji's political success sapped the main foundation of that success.....In proportion as Shivaji's ideal of a Hindu *Swaraj* was based on orthodoxy, it contained within itself the seed of its own death." Fifthly, whereas Maharashtra as a whole gained considerably on account of its political independence under Shivaji, no well-thought-out and organised attempt was made to educate the people and to improve their intellect and character. The common folk remained as ignorant as ever and took little interest in the fortune of the race. On account of this basic failure, the Maratha kingdom, so laboriously built up by the exertion and genius of Shivaji, fell within ten years of the founder's death.

Shambhuji, 1680—1689

On Shivaji's death his second son Raja Ram, then ten years old, was crowned at Raigarh by his mother Soyra Bai in April 1680. But Shambhuji who was confined in the fort of Panhala put its commandant to death, obtained possession of the fort, and won over Hambir Rao Mohite, the commander-in-chief, and proceeding to Raigarh, captured it and threw Raja Ram and Soyra Bai into prison. He carried out his accession on 30th July, appointed Nilo Pant, son of Moro Pant Pingle, as Peshwa and rewarded his other followers. The formal ceremony of coronation took place on 20th January, 1681. But on account of his vicious character, he was very unpopular and a plot was hatched against his life. Getting wind of it, he put many notable persons including his step-mother Soyra Bai to death. The result was the alienation of his nobles and officers against whom Shambhuji had to take strict measures. He grew

distrustful of his father's faithful servants and therefore appointed Kavi Kalash, a Brahman of Kanauj, who was a good Sanskrit and Hindi scholar and poet, as his adviser, and placed him above the Peshwa. As he was an outsider, Maratha nobles and officers hated him bitterly, dubbed him a spy and gave him the nick-name of *Kalusha*. He was unjustly accused of introducing Shambhuji to a life of vice and of being a cause of his ruin. Owing to these circumstances, Shambhuji's reign proved to be a period of dissensions and disturbances. The Maratha prestige fell. But on account of the momentum given to it by Shivaji's brilliant reign, the administration dragged on.

Shambhuji had hardly established his hold over his kingdom before he received the news of the flight of prince Akbar, fourth son of Aurangzeb, to the Dakhin to take shelter with him and to concert measures in co-operation with him to wrest the throne of Hindustan from his father. The circumstances leading to Akbar's rebellion against Aurangzeb and his journey to Maharashtra have been given in the last chapter and need not be repeated here. On crossing the Narmada, Akbar informed (10th May, 1681) Shambhuji of his resolution to depose Aurangzeb in alliance with the Maratha king and seeking his co-operation in the enterprise. The prince journeyed through Khandesh and Baglan via Nasik and Trimbak into north Konkan and reached Pali near Negothna, twenty-five miles north of Raigarh, on 11th June, 1681. Here arrangements were made for his accommodation and comfort and the Maratha king appointed Netaji Palkar who had lived in northern India for ten years and was acquainted with the life at the imperial court, to look after the prince. Shambhuji met him on 23rd November, but no alliance was entered into between them. Shambhuji was not quite sure about the prince's bonafides and feared that his visit might not be a ruse on the part of Aurangzeb. Moreover, the Maratha king on account of his character and domestic difficulties could not spare time and money to undertake an expedition against Delhi. Although he did his best to provide comfort to the fugitive prince yet Akbar must have felt extremely uncomfortable in the unpretentious thatched building in which he was lodged at Pali, and the humble fare which was provided by the Maratha king who had little idea of the life of luxury and splendour that the Mughul princes led in northern India. On account of these circumstances, Akbar's six years' sojourn in Maharashtra proved to

be barren. The lofty project of leading an expedition and deposing Aurangzeb remained only a paper scheme.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb pursued his son to the Dakhin and took up his residence at Aurangabad in the vicinity of which he spent nearly twenty-six years of his life. He sowed dissensions among the followers of Shambhuji and Akbar and won many of them over to his side by bribes and rewards. He sent Shahab-ud-din Khan to block Akbar's path to the north by capturing some of the Maratha key-forts near Nasik. The Khan besieged the fort of Ramsej, seven miles north of Nasik, but was compelled to abandon the siege on account of timely arrival of a Maratha army. Akbar now suggested to Shambhuji that the two should make a joint attack upon Aurangzeb's headquarters, or make a dash through Gujarat into Rajputana, but Shambhuji's situation forbade any such bold undertaking. The hesitation of the two princes gave Aurangzeb an opportunity to invade the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda and to annex them to the empire. Bijapur fell in 1686 and Golkunda in 1687. Then the emperor concentrated his attention against the Marathas. Akbar was now despaired of help from Shambhuji. So in sheer desperation he embarked on a British cargo vessel at Rajapur in February 1687. He took shelter in Iran.

Shambhuji invades Janjira and Chaul, 1681-83

While Aurangzeb was proceeding to the Dakhin, Shambhuji undertook an expedition against the Sidis of Janjira and the Portuguese of Chaul, who were called upon by Aurangzeb to wage war against the Maratha king. The Sidis had raided the Maratha territory right upto the foot of Raigarh towards the end of 1681. Shambhuji replied by besieging Janjira by land and sea and inflicting terrible losses on the Sidis. But just at this time Aurangzeb arrived in the Dakhin and Shambhuji was obliged to raise the siege of Janjira. In 1683, Shambhuji invaded the Portuguese ports of Chaul and Goa and reduced them to great straits. The Marathas defeated the Portuguese at Phonda and captured its strong-hold. Goa too was on the point of surrendering itself when luckily for the Portuguese, Shambhuji had to raise the siege in order to face a Mughul army under Shah Alam who was threatening his rear (November 1683).

Defeat and capture of Shambhuji, 1689

From the beginning of 1684, Shambhuji was on the defensive,

and Aurangzeb sent his armies to capture the Maratha king. Shahab-ud-din Firoz Jang and his son Chain Qilich Khan, the future Nizam-ul-Mulk, were deputed to conquer north Konkan and Baglan. The result was a deadly struggle between the Mughuls and the Marathas, and the latter devastated the Mughul territory from Aurangabad to Burhanpur. But the tables were turned against the Marathas after Aurangzeb had annexed the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda and was free to concentrate his might against Shambhuji. He sent Sarza Khan, who was formerly a general of the Bijapur army to invade the Satara district. In the battle that followed Shambhuji's commander-in-chief Hambir Rao Mohite lost his life. After this, the Mughuls began an encircling movement and Shambhuji, being deserted by most of his followers, moved between Panhala and Raigarh for shelter. The Shirkes who were hostile to Shambhuji joined the Mughuls and defeated Kavi Kalash in November 1688, compelling him to flee for shelter to the fort of Vishalgarh. Shambhuji thereupon defeated the Shirkes and joined Kavi Kalash at Vishalgarh. The Shirkes reported the whereabouts of the Maratha king to Aurangzeb's agents. One of the Mughul generals, named Muqarrab Khan, being informed of Shambhuji's whereabouts, surprised the Maratha king while he was encamped at Sangameshwar. After a small skirmish, Shambhuji and Kavi Kalash were captured and taken prisoners to Aurangzeb's camp (February 1689).

The prisoners were taken to Bahadurgarh where the emperor was encamped. The Maratha king and Kavi Kalash were dressed as bafoons in fool's long caps with bells hanging from them, and mounted on camels, were brought to the imperial camp with drums beating and trumpets pealing. As the prisoners drew near, Aurangzeb descended from the throne and knelt down in prayer to the Almighty for his victory. The emperor had a look at the prisoners after which they were lodged in a cell. Next day he sent a message to Shambhuji offering to spare his life, if the Maratha king (1) surrendered all his forts, (2) revealed his hidden treasures, and (3) disclosed the names of the Mughul officers who were in league with him. Shambhuji disdainfully rejected the offer and he keenly felt the humiliation heaped on him by Aurangzeb, he abused the emperor and his Prophet and asked for one of Aurangzeb's daughters in marriage as a price of his friendship. Ruhulla Khan who had communicated the emperor's offer to Shambhuji, naturally did not report the details of the Maratha king's reply and only hinted

at the foul nature of it. Aurangzeb, who had no faith in magnanimity and forgiveness, ordered Shambhuji and the minister Kavi Kalash to be tortured to death. That very night Shambhuji was blinded. Next day, the tongue of Kavi Kalash was cut out and day after day for a fortnight all manner of torture was applied to them and then the prisoners were removed to Koregaon, where they were put to a cruel and painful death on 21st March, 1689, their limbs being hacked to pieces and thrown to the dogs. Their heads were stuffed with straw and exhibited in the principal cities of the Dakhin to the accompaniment of drums.

Character of Shambhuji

Thus perished the second Maratha king after a brief reign of a little less than nine years. Shambhuji was a brave soldier, but no good ruler or statesman. He lacked his father's genius for organisation and making use of opportunities. Nor did he possess the qualities of disarming opposition, recognising merit in men and pulling on with colleagues. He quarrelled with his father's ministers and other officers and his wicked conduct roused opposition with the result that he began to suspect those who made his father's reign glorious. He failed to take advantage of the presence of Aurangzeb's son Akbar in the Dakhin and could not undertake a joint attack on Aurangzeb or his capital. He proved to be a sad failure inspite of his bravery and dash ; but by the manner of his death and by stoically bearing all the horrible tortures to which he was subjected, Shambhuji atoned for his sins of omission and commission. By his death he achieved what he had failed to do in life. His imprisonment and death united the Marathas and made them determined to fight and overcome the Mughul emperor.

Raja Ram, 1689—1700

On Shambhuji's capture Raja Ram, the younger son of Shivaji, then nineteen years old, was proclaimed king on 19th February, 1689. He released Prahlad Niraji and other high officers who had been unjustly confined by Shambhuji, and made arrangements for the defence of his capital which was besieged by Zulfiqar Khan. Shambhuji's widow Yesu Bai advised Raja Ram to remove himself to Vishalgarh for safety, while she herself boldly stood the siege at Raigarh. Under this lady's inspiration Prahlad Niraji and Shankarji Malhar started an unprecedented campaign of plunder and fire in the Mughul territory. They sent their spies to every part

of the Mughul Dakhin to obtain information of the enemy movement. They tried to prevent reinforcements from reaching Zulfiqar Khan at Raigarh, but the Maratha capital fell through the treachery of one of their own officers. Suryaji Pisal opened the gates to Zulfiqar Khan on 13th November, 1689 on the promise of the grant to him of the *deshmukhi watan* of Wai which he had coveted for a long time. Yesu Bai and her young son Shahu and many other notable persons were taken prisoners and carried away by Zulfiquar Khan to the Mughul camp. Thereafter, Aurangzeb captured many other forts ; but his triumph was short-lived, for now the Maratha war of independence took the turn of a people's war.

The national disaster put the Marathas on their mettle and enabled them to summon all the efforts they were capable of in defence of their home and hearth. Under the leadership of Raja Ram, who was though not a great organising genius like his father, many ardent spirits, the most important among whom was Prahlad Niraji, reputed to be the wisest man of the time in Maharashtra, toiled hard to roll back the tide of the Mughul invasion. The next important adviser of Raja Ram was Ram Chandra Nilkanth, who by his peculiar genius in recognising merits of men and harnessing them in national defence, kept a vigilant eye from his base at Vishalgarh upon the extensive theatre of war from Burhanpur in the north to Jinji in the south. Under these two men, four lieutenants of exceptional abilities, namely, Paras Ram Trimbak Pratinidhi, Shankarji Narain Sachive, Shantaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav, worked wonders, frustrated Aurangzeb's schemes and secured Maratha independence which had been lost by the capture of Shambhuji and the fall of their capital Raigarh.

Raja Ram with his family and court fled to Jinji, which very soon became the Maratha capital. From there bands of enthusiastic and adventurous troops were despatched to attack the Mughuls in Maharashtra, to harass them in all possible ways and to prevent them from consolidating their position in the country. Meanwhile, Jinji was besieged by Aurangzeb's men under Zulfiqar Khan. The siege lasted for eight years, but Raja Ram had already escaped to Maharashtra. The struggle continued and Shantaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav inflicted unspeakable misery on the imperialists, hovered round Aurangzeb's own camp and plundered it more than once. The result was that Aurangzeb who had gone to besiege and

conquer Maharashtra was himself besieged by the Marathas. But the old obstinate emperor persevered on and disdaining the idea of a compromise exerted himself to the utmost, but ultimately met with a miserable failure.

Raja Ram returned to Vishalgarh early in March 1698, eluding the Mughul troops on the route. He established his court at Satara, and although it was lost soon afterwards, the Marathas recovered it in 1704. Raja Ram made a tour of his country and cheered up his officers in the various forts, despatched some troops to ravage Khandesh and Berar, and exact *chauth* from there. In 1699 he proceeded to Singhgarh, giving out that he was going to plunder Surat. A Mughul army compelled him to turn back. The Maratha spirit by that time had risen high and they were gradually becoming confident of rolling back the tide of the Mughul invasion. But Raja Ram soon after fell ill and as Satara was besieged by the enemy, he had to be carried in a palanquin to Singhgarh where he died on March 12, 1700. He had completed his thirtieth year.

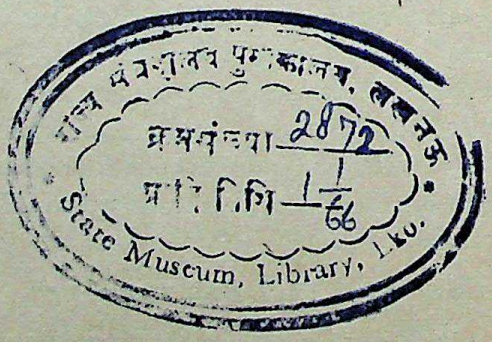
Raja Ram was not possessed of the dash or soldierly talent or initiative of his father. As he was barely ten years of age at the time of Shivaji's death and subsequently kept a prisoner by Shambhuji, he had not been given proper education. Shambhuji's capture and death, however, raised him to the throne. He was fortunate in having two advisers, Ram Chandra Pant and Prahlad Niraji, of exceptional ability and two brave warriors, Shantaji and Dhanaji, to carry out his plans and policy. That is why Raja Ram's reign could boast of having turned the corner as far as Maratha interests were concerned. It must, however, be admitted that Raja Ram was a weak ruler, addicted to opium and dissipation. His great virtue as a ruler was that he gave his confidence and support to his ministers and rarely interfered with their work. This was the main cause of his success.

Ascendancy of Tara Bai, 1700—1707

On Raja Ram's death his widowed queen Tara Bai became the *de facto* head of government. She crowned her son Shivaji II, then a child of four, and became his regent. She was a spirited lady who did not waste time or tears on the fall of the new Maratha capital Satara within a month of Raja Ram's death, infused vigour in her people and organised a tough opposition to Aurangzeb. She exhibited wonderful powers of organisation and inspired the Marathas

with a sense of devotion to their national cause. Aurangzeb, therefore, directed his forces for the conquest of Panhala and Vishalgarh, the two strong fortresses, which became the seats of the Maratha court. The Marathas constantly hovered round the emperor's camp and carried away everything that they could. The emperor captured several Maratha forts, but lost them one by one. Under the leadership of Tara Bai, the Maratha power grew stronger and stronger with the result that Aurangzeb was compelled to be on the defensive. The Marathas, during the last year of the aged emperor's reign, proceeded beyond Maharashtra and led distant expeditions into Malwa and Gujarat. They ravaged Burhanpur, Surat, Baroach and other rich towns of the western coast. They established their rule over Southern Karnatak. In the midst of these difficulties Aurangzeb died on March 2, 1707.

Tara Bai managed the affairs of Maharashtra in the name of her son with skill and ability, but Ram Chandra Pant, who was in favour of Sahu's restoration, opposed the masterful queen, and therefore fell out of favour at the court. Tara Bai's main supporters were Paras Ram Trimbak, Dhanaji Jadhav and Shankarji Narain with whose assistance she prosecuted the war with vigour and success. She moved constantly from fort to fort in order to direct operations and encourage her men. The success of Maratha war of independence was in no small measure due to the indomitable personality of this queen.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